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THE EXIT FROM COMMUNISM

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The Exit from Communism

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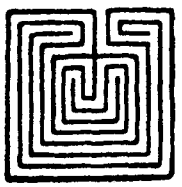

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Preface to the Issue "The Exit from Communism"

THE YEAR 1989, WITH ITS UNPRECEDENTED happenings in both Central and Eastern Europe, must figure among the few whose consequences have transformed the world, creating expectations of a kind familiar to historians preoccupied with other equally seminal ruptures in politics and ideology. If no poet sang the glories of 1989 in words comparable to those made memorable two centuries earlier by Wordsworth—"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven!"—there was no lack of enthusiastic comment, though in a somewhat more prosaic and muted form, principally from those who accepted their mass-media designation as world statesmen, and others taken to be experts on the subject. Though few had dared believe in the possibility of so total a collapse of communist regimes—initially only those outside the Soviet Union—they could not fail to be moved by the spectacle they had rarely allowed themselves to anticipate. A frozen continent, or at least the part that had not joined in moving toward the political democracy and economic prosperity that had gradually become the defining features of Western Europe in the decades after the Second World War, came suddenly to life, losing almost in an instant the subservience and rigidity that were the tell-tale marks of a social universe locked in Marxist belief.

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Today, less than three years later, even those events, so seemingly cosmic, having totally obliterated the communist regimes of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the German Democratic Republic, pale beside the rapid and largely unanticipated dissolution of the master state itself, the Soviet Union. In these circumstances, while the summer and autumn storms of 1989 recede in memory, becoming strangely diminished, there is an acute and growing sense of uncertainty about what will happen in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere in the region. What will tomorrow's political weather prove to be? Will it indeed issue in "a new freedom" for millions throughout the former communist world, or are we witnessing a brief respite before other and no less menacing storm clouds wholly confound and invalidate the euphoric political weather predictions of yesterday? Many, having failed to be prescient about what 1990 was likely to bring, offer their views on whether we may be witnessing a temporary calm before a cataclysmic storm, and what the consequences of new outbreaks of social and political violence are likely to be. The mass media cooperate in creating visions of political freedom, with their promise of a soon-to-be-restored market economy, increasingly threatened by forces variously described as nationalist, xenophobic, populist, or authoritarian. It is increasingly common for even more incendiary terms to be used: among them, *totalitarian* and *fascist*.

There is a great and compelling invitation to prophesy, and it is beguiling precisely because it encourages imaginative and novel scenarios, intellectual leaps into the unknown. While no one can deplore these perpetual excursions into what the last decade of the century is likely to bring—whether we are about to witness a Weimar Russia destroyed by a fascist dictatorship —these largely intellectual forays provide fuel for the mass-media representations that offer still more lurid tales of what may be impending. The greatest number of these tend to obscure what has already been learned in these last years about the Soviet Union, communism, and Marxism, and why all manner of earlier interpretations and expectations—once believed to have merit—are today summarily discarded. This issue of *Dædalus* is more than an account of the revolutionary years 1989 to the present as experienced by those compelled to submit to communist rule. It is an account also of how many in the West perceived these events, how it continues to view this world today, and why, despite the continued protests (and

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promises) about all that the older and more stable democracies wish to do to assist those that are only now being created, these efforts have to date been so limited.

How is it possible that the principal world democracies remain so obviously hesitant in understanding the choices they confront? Why have they been so slow in devising policies to aid all manner of precariously situated newly established postcommunist regimes? Is the understanding of the nature of "the crack-up" in the Soviet world very substantial? Is it still informed by a too-simple political and economic analysis, which sees only what those committed to traditional partisan interpretation wish to see? Is Marxism as dead as some imply? Or, is it likely, as with so many other utopias in the past, to revive, rising again, perhaps taking wholly new forms? The Soviet societies that crashed were not *ancien régimes*, in the manner of the France of the Bourbons or the Russia of the Romanovs. They were modern regimes, and they proved vulnerable. Which others are also vulnerable, in ways that we choose not to acknowledge, and are likely to fall next, and not only in that remnant of the world that still flies the banner of communism?

To ask such questions is to say that the phenomena of these last years are still inadequately understood. Historic events have occurred; they cry out for close and critical analysis. It is vital that we seek to interpret with whatever objectivity we can muster not only what happened in the former Soviet Union, in the European states once dominated by that vast military power, but also what happened in those states spared Marxist political and military domination. In short, this issue is not only about those who have made their exit from communism, and what they have experienced since, but also about those still dominated by communist elites, and those that never were. It treats the former Soviet Union, obviously, and at considerable length, but also Russia, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. It is not an accident that the issue concludes with essays on Italy and China—the former a society where the Communist Party never ruled, though political arrangements allowed it to share power, and the latter a society where it continues to rule, though in ways not always understood—and that even those articles do not begin to suggest the true dimensions of this *Dædalus* issue.

The silent ghost throughout is the United States, pretending to be in command of a new international order where it alone qualifies as

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a superpower. The issue describes, and not always in very flattering terms, how its academic and intellectual experts perceived the Soviet Union and communist regimes over long decades, how its political leaders are today relating to the new regimes that have been established, and why their policies remain so timid and lame. Indeed, had the issue not grown so long, it might have included a final essay on the United States and its contributions to "the exit," but this subject would have deflected attention from a larger matter. Today, though politics may lead the president of the United States to take full credit for the United States "winning" the Cold War, such a view does not sit at all well with other NATO states, who imagine that they too deserve some measure of credit. More important, however, is the fact that all are today seeking to understand the challenges that exist, that arise not only from the resurgence of nationalist and ethnic sentiment and conflict, but from that larger challenge represented by modernity and the growing concern about the adequacy of its values and beliefs. The economic distress in a great part of the former communist world is very apparent; its social remedies are substantially less obvious. Beyond these, however, there are moral dilemmas that confound men and women troubled by the threat of vast population movements, by hunger and violence, by a sense that nothing is as it was, that one burden has indeed been lifted only to be replaced by others.

This *Dædalus* issue is of course about "revolutions," in the style of the late 1980s and 1990s. It is also about world order and disorder, and why statesmen, confounded by the obscure and difficult imperatives of both, find themselves on *terra incognita*, more so perhaps than at any other time in this century. From both Europeans and Americans writing for this issue comes a sense of urgency; it scarcely corresponds to the proposition that we will soon see a dawn with everything in place, communism having been effectively eliminated. The outlook is substantially more confused, and not only in the former communist world. Indeed, it is another proposition that requires to be acknowledged: that the problems are not only in the crumbling communist world but also in the United States, in Western Europe, in Japan. To argue this is to be liberated from all manner of conventional thinking that fails to understand why the events of these last years—in some ways unique in world history—call for bolder and more imaginative analysis than was common in the earlier days

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of the dismantling of the Berlin Wall or the euphoria that followed the happy events in Prague. Today's measured though largely rhetorical concern is not nearly sufficient for the crisis before us.

At a time when there is so much talk about the resurgence of nationalism, and how that is likely to threaten domestic stability and international order, the theme deserves the close attention it receives in this issue. To continue to regard nationalism as simply a regressive nineteenth-century force—a genie that needs most urgently to be put back into its bottle—is to close one's eyes to all the circumstances that are today generating patriotic and nationalist impulses, almost entirely confounding the more utopian predictions of yesterday. The year 1992, neither in Europe nor elsewhere in the world, is likely to bring the kinds of easy accommodation between rival states and rival interests within individual states that was once hoped for. Again, it is not because "reaction" is in the saddle, or is about to establish itself there, that there are such compelling reasons for looking more closely, not only at what is happening in the former communist world, but also in those other parts that for decades proudly proclaimed their freedom, and that are today so disinclined to dwell on their larger responsibilities to millions who suffered communism for decades.

It cannot be an accident that so many who write for this issue emphasize the urgency of the moment, the need for the West to do more, to do it at once. It is curious that so little is anticipated from the other great economic power of the day, Japan, whose gaze remains largely fixed on East Asia, the United States, and only very occasionally on the former communist states of Europe. Nor, for that matter, is very much said about the United Nations. While there is increasing talk in the mass media of all that this institution may soon begin to do, given the end of the decades-long American-Soviet rivalry, the UN figures very little in any discussion of what it can do to establish a new international order in the post–Cold War world. In many ways, the thinking about postcommunist Europe is too much of a world restored, following a model established to revive defeated states in the years immediately after World War II. A much more venturesome set of initiatives is called for that will require unprecedented international collaboration. The world of the 1990s is not that of the 1940s; the Cold War may have produced more lasting scars than is generally admitted.

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This issue was made possible by the generous gift of two individuals, anonymous benefactors who know how vital it is that we understand the complex world we live in, who realize how much we rely on the kinds of scholarship and learning represented in this issue. We feel a great debt to them, and also to the authors who labored under impossible deadlines. We all believed that early publication was imperative. The current debate, in both the United States and Europe, must be broadened, made more vivid and vital. To fail to do so is to forego the opportunity to reconsider what the world was compelled to endure for the greater part of this century, what options it may now very legitimately entertain.

S.R.G.

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Frank E. Manuel

A Requiem for Karl Marx

THIS IS A REQUIEM OF MY OWN DEVISING for Karl Marx—an unauthorized ritual for a Jew who was born in 1818, was baptized at age six into the Lutheran faith in the Catholic Rhineland city of Trier (then Prussian territory), received his doctorate of philosophy at Jena, turned into a radical journalist and philosophical economist, and, after living in exile for thirty-four years, died in London in 1883, an atheist and leader of the world communist movement.

In the twentieth century, when Karl Marx became an icon, he suffered many changes of fortune in the two communist empires that adopted him. In Russia he usually formed part of a trinity along with Engels and Lenin, their giant portraits looming over the reviewing stand in Red Square on May Day and on the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Marx even penetrated the inner sanctum of Stalin's study: affixed to the wall was a photograph taken in 1876 showing a seated Marx, amply bewhiskered and clad in a neatly pressed frock coat, with his monocle suspended from a string—more a proper English gentleman than a revolutionary spied upon by the police of many nations. By 1990 Lenin's bald head shone in isolation on the backdrop of the solemn assemblies in the auditoriums of the Supreme Soviet and the Congress of Communist Parties, though Marx continued to be accorded places of dignity here and there: in the Moscow theater of the absurd, his picture still looked down on Ronald Reagan as he addressed a group of Soviet lawmakers. Now Lenin too, the loyal disciple, has been dislodged. In China for a time Marx and Engels used to be squeezed in between Lenin and Stalin in

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official displays; with shifting communist policy, however, Stalin was often, though not always, dropped from the group. Of late, Tiananmen Square is decorated only with the mammoth portrait of Mao Zedong. Marx's status was maintained—though pockmarked with ambivalences—throughout the Cultural Revolution, and prominent Chinese officials continued to make pilgrimages to the Karl Marx Haus in Trier, the baroque mansion where he was born, to whose exhibits they contributed a porcelain plate adorned with an odd picture of him that subtly made his visage resemble Mao's. Other communist countries had honored Marx each in its own fashion, renaming a city, a street, an institute, a university, after him. Then abruptly, before our very eyes, he vanished—everywhere but in China.

THE LURE OF POPULAR SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

Viewed in broad perspective, communist countries and political parties waiting in the underground in many other lands over the last 150 years were explicitly committed to the creation of a new man, a better and happier human being in this world. Conceptions of this character had abounded in European social philosophy for many centuries—they lie at the core of the age-old tradition of Western utopian thought—and they were sustained by a potpourri of historicophilosophical arguments. In Marx's lifetime there was a breakthrough of a novel idea, the evolutionary theory of Darwin, which Marx and Engels pounced upon as soon as *The Origin of Species* was published in 1859. There they saw proof positive that in nature itself there was a process of advancement, of betterment, that could serve as the underpinning of their system. Socialist theories thenceforth acquired a crucial adjective, and what Marx and Engels called "scientific socialism" came into being. In the nineteenth century science achieved a prestige in European and Westernized Asiatic cultures that it had never enjoyed before, and for Marx and Engels it replaced the religious and moral-philosophical codes that had prevailed for centuries. Atheism had been a fundamental tenet of Marx from his youth onward, and science in Marxist lands was by definition atheistic.

At Marx's funeral in 1883 Engels set forth in succinct language the discovery that made their doctrine scientific. "As Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature," the orator intoned:

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> so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history; the simple fact, previously hidden under ideological growths, that human beings must first of all eat, drink, shelter and clothe themselves before they can turn their attention to politics, science, art and religion; that therefore production of the immediate means of life and thereby the given stage of economic development of a people or of a period forms the basis on which the State institutions, the legal principles, the art and even the religious ideas of the people in question have developed and out of which they must be explained, instead of exactly the contrary, as was previously attempted.[1]

In Soviet Russia the corollary of this law for revolutionary practice was patent; all other transformations in society had to be subordinate to industrialization, to the expansive "production of the immediate material means of subsistence." When he came to power, Lenin, who had battled with an array of Russian and German revisionist Marxisms for three decades, was prepared to deal with foreign capitalists, to throw the niceties of doctrine to the winds in order to increase industrial output. This entailed the immediate introduction of advanced technological enterprises into Russia, which would ultimately become competitive with the West. Through war and peace and war again for seven decades, under a succession of central plans and party secretaries that included monsters and buffoons, this was the lodestar of Soviet communist policy, with which no one disagreed in theory. In order to be successful in the long term, the satisfaction of present consumer desires and peasant needs had to be deferred while the solid technological base of future bounty was laid. This orientation of Russian policy, which could be interpreted as a pragmatic decision to outstrip capitalism in quantitative production, had deep roots in Marxist thought. The hammer took precedence over the sickle. Industrialize, industrialize at any cost in order that the new man of the future may be born not in a manger but in an industrial park. When confronted in 1875 by a group of German Social Democrats prating "Equality now," Marx had declared categorically in his slashing critique of their Gotha program that equality would have to be postponed until the means of production were built up and an abundance of goods flowed freely. Only then could the exultant banderole of the higher phase of communism (*höhere Phase*) be unfurled: from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs. The productive mechanism was the priority to which

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virtually all else had to be sacrificed. It could be argued that, in recent years, even when openness has replaced tyranny in Soviet Russia and the shibboleths of a market economy fill the air, this rock of Saint Karl lies there in the Kremlin as solid as Saint Peter's in Rome and the Kaaba in Mecca.

GLOBAL DIFFUSION OF MARXIST THOUGHT

Beginning with the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, published by the Communist League in London in February 1848, Marxist ideas were formally incorporated in a series of European and American political platforms, both in parliamentary systems where radical parties were legal and in states where they were beyond the pale of the law. Over the years, these party programs have exhibited a remarkable changeability, as doctrines long revered as pillars of Marxism, like the inevitability of class struggle, have been abandoned or emended, to the accompaniment of bitter internecine disputations between old and new believers. In many countries the alterations have been so extensive it is difficult to recognize what, if anything, survived of the original gospel among the German Social Democrats, the French Socialists, the British Labourites, though a faint echo of Marxism lingers on. When after World War I Russia adopted the system of Soviet republics, the works of Marx attained canonical status and were imposed with rigor as official beliefs to which citizens were obliged to take at least a formal pledge of allegiance; rejection or deviation from them could be severely punished. This Marxist doctrinal hegemony was extended to other Central and Eastern European countries after World War II and endured until the 1980s. As recently as 1989, the works of Marx, along with those of Engels, were still an intrinsic and compulsory part of the educational systems of Eastern European countries. China has not yet cut itself completely loose from the bonds of Marxist philosophy, though its obeisance is hedged with caveats.

It is difficult to assess the meaningfulness of the required study of Marx, where it was enforced. One is now told that when lectures on Marx were compulsory, students surreptitiously read novels while the lecturer droned on. Even in China, by the 1980s there was a tendency for the professor to distinguish between the relevant and the irrelevant in Marx's writings as they pertained to contemporary

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events. In recent years the force-feeding of Marx in many communist lands clearly led to boredom and often repugnance. One hears jokes about indoctrination by command, about course papers churned out by friends, about examinations that nobody failed. But after all, this is quite familiar to those of us who have taught less doctrinaire required courses in American universities.

Despite widespread nonobservance, the diffusion of Marx's thought among intellectual elites in the century following his death is a phenomenon that arouses wonderment. It was by no means restricted to the Central and Eastern parts of Europe. In the decades after World War II Marxist ideas pervaded the intellectual atmosphere of whole strata of the population in Western Europe and America, even among individuals who did not formally adhere to Communist Party tenets. In China the writings of Marx did battle with the precepts of Confucius, and the mainland victory of communism in 1949 was the end of a long struggle that had begun with what Mao Zedong called the cannon volley of the Russian October Revolution. Revived as a philosopher, Marx became the revered mentor of sophisticated French and English philosophers and scientists, who discovered in his jejune works depths of wisdom only they could fathom. His inchoate early writings, often left in manuscript, were ransacked by academics and inflated into philosophical, economic, and moral systems. Historical and literary studies became so saturated with economic-social explanations that it was supererogatory to trace them back to their original Marxist inspiration. Marxist concepts were absorbed from popular compendia or without reading Marx at all. Throughout the reign of Mao Zedong, in Chinese translations of Russian translations Marx was taught in communist China's schools, where excerpts from his works were used to indoctrinate young aspirants to political power. In France, Germany, England, and the United States, a humanist Marx had been created when his youthful manuscripts were published in the 1930s; and as recently as the 1960s and 1970s they served as a secular substitute for religious belief to a large body of American students in search of a progressivist anthropology. A hope theology with Marxist overtones, mediated by the German philosopher Ernst Bloch, seeped into the Protestant church; and in Latin American countries young Jesuits became agents of transmission for a Marxist liberation theology. Viewed in retrospect, the spread of Marxism represented an amaz-

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ingly fast conversion of millions of human beings to a new spiritual worldview, even though the doctrine was militantly materialist. The recent dissolution of Marxist thought has been equally swift.

UTOPIAN ATTRACTIONS OF THE SYSTEM

The simple seductions of the system, which may help to account for the rapidity of its victory, can perhaps best be illustrated by a series of articles published in 1877 in the Leipzig *Vorwärts* (*Forward*). There, with Marx's approval, Engels presented the German Social Democratic Party with a comprehensive survey of the correct doctrine in all aspects of philosophy, economy, history; and, despite the known objection of both men to utopian blueprints of the future state of humanity, under the aegis of "scientific socialism" he laid down the fundamental principles that would guide mankind after it made the leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom. These articles, later published as a modest volume commonly called the *Anti-Dühring,* were not weighted down with the formidable scholarly apparatus of *Das Kapital.* The text of the *Anti-Dühring* in its abbreviated form, *Socialisme utopique et socialisme scientifique* (1880), appeared in numerous editions and translations and, second only to *The Communist Manifesto,* became the canonical work of Marx and Engels adaptable to all times and places. The futurist promise of communism, set forth in a well-organized breviary, could henceforth be understood by selected artisans, if not by all workingmen. While Engels did not call for the immediate expropriation of the rich, he reiterated in an expanded form the universal dream of human potentiality actualized that Marx had incorporated in the *Critique of the Gotha Program.* In the original *Anti-Dühring* Engels went one better than the halting "higher phase" of communism:

> The possibility of securing for every member of society, through social production, an existence which is not only fully sufficient from a material standpoint and becoming richer from day to day, but also guarantees to them the completely unrestricted development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties—this possibility now exists for the first time, but it *does* exist.[2]

The ordinary man might have to skip Engels' exposition of dialectics, of the negation of the negation, of the nature of medieval economy, but he could conceivably understand his optimistic assurances:

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> The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the processes of production. The state is not 'abolished,' *it withers away*. . . . Nature and history will then become the voluntary act of men themselves. The objective, external forces that have hitherto dominated history, will then pass under the control of men themselves.[3]

Stopping short of doctrinaire anarchism and the proclamation of utopia now, the promise embodied in works such as the *Anti-Dühring*, rather than the weighty Marxist tomes, may outlive the great deception of seventy years of tyranny because it responds to a longing in man that is probably ineradicable. Christianity suffered the temporary blackout of Julian the Apostate, to be reborn. Why should Marxism be less tenacious, multiplying deviant strains and surviving? But since I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, my primary concerns are with the past of Marx and Marxism, not its future, though in setting forth the strength and weakness of historical Marxism I have my eye cocked on the possibility of a resurrection. The gilded halo of Marx the icon may have gotten abraded of late, even in the lands that still display his image, but after an interval icons have a way of being refurbished.

RELATIONS OF THE MAN, THE THOUGHT, THE PRACTICE

A skeptical secularist today can hardly expect to find all the teachings of Christ embodied in the often bloody history of institutional Christianity; nor will a historian of thought be foolhardy enough to seek in the tyrannical political regimes that have labeled themselves communist a full implementation of Marx's great expectations. Theory and practice rarely if ever move in congenial harmony. But the liquidation of philosophical Marxism has recently proceeded with such phenomenal speed that the collapse of what was once a monumental structure baffles an observer accustomed to less precipitous intellectual change. Both the tempo of Marxism's earlier triumphs throughout the world and the rudeness of its present-day disestablishment are bewildering. Was Marxism a short-lived delusion, an aberration in modern history? Did it leave behind anything worth preserving? Was its failure the consequence of its unfortunate

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application in vast land masses like Russia and China with deeply ingrained authoritarian traditions and political economies that foredoomed the effort from the outset? The decline and fall of Marxism calls for a Gibbon, and alas, we may be too close to the events to sit on the Capitoline Hill in Rome and nostalgically survey the ruins. But despite our handicap we can bear witness to the events in our fashion and ask more questions than we can answer.

Of course one could take the position that there never was an inherent connection between the philosophy Marx developed in Berlin, Paris, Cologne, and London and the economic-political apparatus imposed upon Russia and China by revolutionary leaders primarily motivated by a resolve to seize and entrench themselves in power. Perhaps a dismal rehearsal of the contests of rival factions, irrespective of their nominal commitment to one brand of Marxism or another, is then all that can be recounted about the history of the seventy years of communist hegemony in Russia and the forty in China. Yet the plain fact that a succession of leaders throughout the world called themselves Marxist and used terminology manifestly related to the writings of Marx cannot be dismissed as totally irrelevant. To state the case weakly and with diffidence: the adoption of his name may have shaped the rhetoric of men in power irrespective of the varied cultural inheritances of the peoples they governed, which doubtless deeply colored their policies and in the end may have predetermined, at least in part, the fortune of their Marxism. Gorbachev's tragic addiction to analysis of the development of phenomena in "phases" bore the tell-tale marks of Marx readings in school. In his departure speech, he touched obliquely on "ideological bias" as one of the forces of resistance to his grand project of reformation, but he still justified his policies in the Marxist mode: they were "historically correct" and everything that was done had been "prepared by the entire preceding period." Marx was not mentioned in the ceremonials of Soviet dissolution, and it is reported that Lenin in his tomb on Red Square was harangued by a lone drunk; but only those insensitive to the pervasiveness of ideas will deny their ghostly presence.

A proper requiem for Karl Marx cries for the invention of a tricornered metaphor that would relate a psychological profile of his person to the philosophic-economic theories he created, then bind them to the twentieth-century political movements and societies that

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paraded him as an icon. For some this may imply cause and effect in a series that mounts from Marx the man to the revolutionary party to the first phase of the new communist world order. But the process was hardly so neat. When Marx himself was confronted by a similar, if less complicated problem, the connection between the realm of ideas and production relations in the material world, he found refuge in formulas asserting that ideas "reflected" economic-social realities, or were "determined" by them. The verses from the preface to Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, published in 1859, have been repeated like a litany by philosophical Marxists:

> The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness.[4]

Marx thus avoided the language of simple causation and respected the signs and forms of Hegelian dialectic. Theoretically, he eschewed any focus on the individual as irrelevant in explaining the behavior of classes or their leaders—a position from which he often departed in the heat of controversy as he hurled thunderbolts of ad hominem vilification against a rival revolutionary.

Can a parallel really be drawn between the spirit of Karl Marx the private man, the thinker, the cantankerous, authoritarian revolutionary leader, and the spirit of the societies and parties that chose him as an icon? The dissonance between the sermons of a savior who foretells the coming of a new man and the bestial actions of his disciples grates on the tender ears that would prefer historical lullabies. But followers of a religious cult or a secular messianic movement have been known to reflect the temper of their founder, however distorted their image of him, though generations may have passed and they may live thousands of miles away from his birthplace. Not only are the content and logic of ideas transmitted; what is often more striking, the color, mood, fragrance, or stench of the ideas accompanies them to the ends of the earth. Whether Marxism will be born again in the future is unknowable, but the historical relationship between the character of Marx the discoverer and the

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institutions that purported to embody his thought continues to intrigue us.

A MARXIST BLIND SPOT: THE POWER OF ETHNICITY

In present-day Soviet and Central European republics Marxist thought has just faded away, a Prague intellectual told me. The fate of Marxism has been more complex in China, where specific doctrines have fallen in and out of favor for four decades, a reflection of the zigzags of Mao Zedong's and Deng Xiaoping's policies.

Underestimating the power of nationalism and ethnicity as a militant psychic force in modern political consciousness was the flaw in the Marxist vision of man that, more than any other deficiency, sapped the vitality of the doctrine in Central and Eastern Europe. Where Marxism has survived, as in China, albeit in a much-diluted potion, it was integrated with a revolutionary *national* movement that drew its strength from the image of the people as an extended family—the *minzu*. During the Cultural Revolution Mao's communism preserved the idea of class struggle as the primary social force to animate a bureaucracy prone to fall into the somnolence of routine; economic centralization was secondary. When Deng succeeded to the leadership, the slogans of modernization were developed along economic lines, and the pivotal role of ideology was de-emphasized. Simultaneously, intellectuals in pursuit of freedom resuscitated the writings of the young Marx, the Westerner's humanist Marx, with the concept of alienation in its multiple meanings writ large. These works became the breeding ground of the martyrs of Tiananmen Square. Today the danger of swallowing Marx whole is recognized by Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, who recently advised the restored Communist Party cadres to study Marxism only to the extent that it had lessons directly applicable to their positions—military teachings for army officers, educational guidelines for professors—a caricature of the *Gotha Program Critique*'s "to each according to his needs."

Philosophical Marxism in China has nonetheless proved itself a useful instrument for pragmatic rulers, filling for a time the spiritual vacuum in a society that, unlike the West, does not conceal a religious gene somewhere among its chromosomes. And the unifying force of Han ethnic origins has stood China in good stead as the revolution-

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ary nation directed its rage against the imperialist foreigners. The nation could assimilate Marxism without being distracted by its universalism. Lenin's empire has not been so fortunate. From its very foundation it failed to grapple successfully with a host of ethnic residues that after seventy years have still refused to disappear. Where in the West nationhood struck deep roots, Marxist universalism may have made inroads but it had no staying power.

Marxism in the West today faces a challenge from ethnic and nationalist ideologies once believed to be mere vestiges from the past that had long since been superseded. In Marx's lifetime the first revolutionary international was organized as a loose federation of delegates from flimsy groups in nation-states, and support for a few ethnic independence movements was intermingled with devotion to the cause of proletarian emancipation. But from the outset there was a certain fuzziness in Marx's conceptualization of the relations between an ethnic unit and the universalism of communism. He could hardly have foreseen that ethnicity would become one of the forces crashing through the agglomeration of Soviet republics.

Nineteenth-century utopian movements that in retrospect can be described as communist, socialist, or anarchist were preoccupied with the nature and size of the unit of living together once the ideal system of society would be put into place. Associations, cooperatives, communities, phalansteries were by definition small and for the most part self-sufficient entities, and no elaborate provisions were made for their interrelationships. When experiments of the new order were established by Owenites and Fourierists, they sought out virgin territories where members could live in isolation, uncontaminated by the corrupt economic and political institutions that had condemned mankind to wretchedness. The Platonic model was still a living presence; in the *Laws* the optimum number of households was predetermined and tight eugenic controls kept the figure stable at 5,040.

Communism in its twentieth-century form was condemned to triumph in gigantic empires; but long before Russian and Chinese communism became political realities, Marx had opted for large structures as the ideal embodiments of communist civilization, fitting successors on a higher level to the international capitalist organizations. Both in communism's drive to victory and in its ultimate realization, Marx and Engels accepted the principle of historical nationality (especially for Poles and Irishmen) as a tool, though

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militant nationalist movements were usually viewed with suspicion as retrograde deviations, impediments to the fulfillment of the universal species-being of the communist future.

The abstraction of a communist utopia that is stateless and seamless is being dissolved by the many concrete ethnic entities at odds with one another to a point of mutual destruction. What could be more all embracing and impersonal than a Comintern, a communist international? What is more individual, specific, particular than an ethnic bond, a nostalgia for the smell and taste of mother's food, for the familiar turns and twists of a folk dance or a folk song? The Soviet world, a union that has lost its name, is today fragmented into more than a hundred groups speaking different languages. In the ethnic utopia, the individual fulfills his destiny in tribal, not universal, emancipation. The core of his being is his *Volk* nature, as if he were present at the genesis of his people in an aboriginal landscape. His humanity is expressed in that specific *Volk* nature fashioned in the early years of his life, modifiable perhaps, but in its essence stable. Marxist universalism, with its eye focused on the future, goes by the board especially when ethnic particularism is infused with the incense of sectarian religious revivalism.

The explosion of ethnic movements in all parts of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics brought to the fore one of the endemic, hidden conflicts of Marxist thought and communist societies. The plain declaration of communism in Babeuf's *Manifesto of the Equals* was written with the presumption that it would be applicable without modification to all human collectives. Only a few years before this forthright, if simplistic, document was drafted in Paris, a long, complicated treatise composed in overheated German prose had been printed in Riga (1784–1791) by Johann Gottfried Herder, a German born in the Baltic region who had once been Immanuel Kant's student at the University of Königsberg. Herder's voluminous work, which bore the turgid title *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind,* was destined to become the romantic manifesto of ethnic or *Volk* identity in Eastern and Central Europe, the bible of a nativist cultural rebellion against Frenchified cosmopolitanism and a political assault against the dynastic empires—Russian, Austrian, Prussian, and Turkish—that had emerged from the medieval world. Thus two antagonistic revolutionary forces with their respective communist and nationalist doctrines, which sprouted many different

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species, confronted each other at the opening of the nineteenth century. The constant war between the communist and the nationalist world outlooks is an undercurrent of much of modern history down to the present.

Catering to a prepossession with ethnicity, that composite of past and present, essentially contradicted a Marxist philosophy based upon "phases" of economic development in a state of progression leading to a future golden age. The ethnic philosopher glorifies a heroic past, usually incarnated in a military chieftain who extended ethnic boundaries beyond their current limits. The vision of the idealized past is fortified by traditional pleasures that are enjoyed to the full in the present and hold the promise of continued sameness of delight in the foreseeable future. Ethnicity wants no new words or social forms. Its language is preserved in the intimacy of the hearth and of the bedchamber. If the siren call of the universalist future is muted, even temporarily, the voice of the ethnic past wells up. Under communist hegemony and Stalin's doctrine of proletarian internationalism, ethnicity for years took refuge in hidden places, while proclamations of future happiness for all mankind were being trumpeted in the marketplace.

The illusion that ethnic hostilities would evaporate under a centralized system that gave paper recognition to minority identities was bequeathed by a man who had in his mind's eye the abstract communist human being of the future. For Marx and for Lenin the allegiances of nationality were leftovers of a primitive barbaric past destined to be wiped out by the benevolent onslaught of large-scale industrialization.

KARL MARX AND THE DENIAL OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

The incapacity of Marxism to cope with nationalism and ethnicity can be traced back to many sources; but one of them may well be the stateless, homeless, godless Karl. Having once surrendered his Prussian citizenship, he was rejected when he later appealed for its reinstatement, and his application for British papers was refused on the grounds that he had been disloyal to his king and country. At the time of his death the Reuters dispatch described him as the leader of the revolutionary organization known for short as the International, and newspapers mentioned his Israelite origin. Though he once

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remarked to his Dutch uncle, the merchant Lion Philips, that they both came from the same stock as Disraeli—*Stamm* was the term he used—he never directly referred to himself as a Jew, and he frequently expressed his loathing for the Jewish religion and for Jews.

Any examination of Marx that probes beneath the surface of his economic iconoclasm and his political universalism faces the complexity of his own struggle with national identity, in particular with the nature of his Jewish stock. By contrast with the rarity even of veiled allusions to his origins, there are numerous documents in which Marx mocks the "Jewish" character of rivals for revolutionary leadership in the communist movement, especially if they were operating in defiance of his international organization. His language ridiculing Jewish usurers and haggling could easily meld with the refuse heap of anti-Semitic literature in the German world. In private correspondence with his friend Engels, descriptions of Jews are thick with scatological obscenities; Moses Mendelssohn was referred to as a "shit-windbag." *Jödel* (Jew boy) was among the milder of his epithets. Baron Izzy—Ferdinand Lassalle—was the most dangerous of his Jewish rivals, an object of scorn both before and after his death. Public utterances were somewhat more political, as Jews were identified with exploiting capitalists or groveling bootlickers of men in power.

What was Marx himself according to his own lights? A Rhinelander was the nearest he came to a specific definition, a mask for the identity he tried to suppress. Here the enigma of Karl Marx begins to unravel. Marx the wandering Jew failed to appreciate the power of ethnicity in modern Europe, while his religious and ethnic status as a baptized Jew without a country had devastating consequences for his psychic economy. The turmoil of the young Marx is amply illustrated in letters of the 1830s. While his father, an Enlightenment lawyer, was showered with sudden outbursts of love during Marx's absence at the University of Berlin, his mother was an object of disdain. She was uncultivated, a Dutch rabbi's daughter in a strange land. In long complaints written in clumsy German, she burdened her son with importunities about his personal habits—his eating and drinking, his rejection of her homely hygienic precepts, his neglect of his sisters and brothers, and the general disorder of his life. After his father's premature death, she held tight the purse strings of his legacy, protecting what there was, no great fortune, for her many daughters

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without dowry. Though she too had ultimately been baptized, at the age of thirty-eight, Marx associated her with the accursed Jewish religion to which she had clung in annoying little ways. Because of it, never would he become a university professor in the Jew-baiting German world. At the same time, he despised the Jewish usurers with whom he was classed. His hapless Jewish mother was the personification of the ugly characteristics he attributed to Jews, whose skin he could not shed despite his formal conversion. The self-hate that the complex relations with his mother engendered is patent in the involuted arguments of the one extended piece he composed on the "Jewish question," *Zur Judenfrage*. The only salvation for Jews, he claimed, lay in the total emancipation of Man, with a majuscule. The battle for the award of civil rights to Jews was preposterous in his view since the state was inhuman to *all* its inhabitants. Drowning the Jewish question in a sea of philosophical clichés about the plight of mankind in general became his camouflage for self-hate, a submerged, gnawing source of pain.

Psychologists of many persuasions have made the leap from singling out a major source of inner conflict in the young Marx to the creation of a philosophical system designed to serve as a battering ram against the whole of capitalist civilization. Even if the dynamics of the process are not followed in detail, the conjecture that the self-hate of Marx the Jew was transformed into a universal rage against the existing order of society has an element of the plausible. The sequence of a gruesome apocalyptic portrayal of the society into which Marx was born and a vision of a future golden age in which there would be neither Christian nor Jew, neither proletarian nor capitalist exploiter, accords with a traditional religious pattern. Buried in Marx's soul was the messianic fire, alive in the rabbinic expositors of the prophets of Israel and passed on through generations of rabbis among both his father's and his mother's forebears, that foretold universal redemption.

KARL MARX'S REFUGE: MESSIANIC UNIVERSALISM SECULARIZED

The earliest self-revelation of the young Marx is an essay entitled "Reflection of a Youth on the Choice of a Calling," written when he was seventeen and graduating from the gymnasium in Trier. "The

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guiding rod that must direct us in the choice of a profession," he wrote, "is the welfare of mankind, our own improvement. . . . The nature of man is so ordered that he can achieve his own perfection only when he works for the well-being of his world."[5] As a youth Marx had assimilated both a Judaic and a Lutheran sense of an inner voice that was the guide to the right determination. For anyone who has read Luther's *Jews and Their Lies,* a Jewish Lutheran must appear a monstrous oxymoron. But Western culture has shown a penchant for the most outlandish syncretisms, and young Marx's essay bears traces of both religious strains. The economic theory, the scientism, the French Revolutionary rhetoric that he despised but used, all varied from decade to decade in his writings; but they are really superstructures on a moralist foundation, animated by messianic prophecy, that dates from his adolescence.

The seventeen-year-old's analysis of the nature of a life goal would later be transferred from his individual person to all mankind. The analogy between the cycle of a human life and the course of history was so common in Marx's culture that it was trite and virtually inescapable. His extraordinary self-awareness encompassed a knowledge of inner struggle, a war between the spiritual and the physical elements in one's being, and a dread that whoever did not resolve this conflict in the soul would be defeated by the wild turmoil of existence. But he who overcame the anguish of this war would emerge a hero, indomitable; burdens could not bend him and he would enjoy a bliss that was no shriveled egotistical pleasure, but a happiness that would be shed upon millions. His fame would be everlasting and when he died his ashes would be moistened with the hot tears of noble men. Bereft of the immortality of the Jewish just man, unable to accept the Lutheran salvation of the baptized babe, Marx, like so many Enlightenment figures—Condorcet among them—had to create an Elysium of his own. In the end it turned out to be the eternal fame of the schoolbook Roman hero, lathered with romantic sentimentality. The cast of Marx the liberator of mankind was self-molded at an early age.

But despite the triumphal tone of the graduation exercise, in one passage Marx gave voice to a strange prefiguration of the bitterness of his later psychic fate:

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> Self-contempt is a serpent constantly gnawing at one's breast; it sucks the life-blood out of the heart and mixes it with the venom of the hatred of man and of despair.[6]

THE DENIAL OF INALIENABLE INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

There is a distinction between Marx's messianic vision born of Judaism and Lutheranism, confused as it may have been, and the rare pictures of the future that, despite his formal repudiation of utopian socialism, have been glorified by his disciples. The crux of the difference lies in the role of the individual in the historical process. For all their orientation toward a future kingdom of heaven, both Judaism and Christianity promulgated precise codes of individual moral conduct that were acceptable to God. In the Marxist corpus composed years after his adolescent fantasy, the significance of the individual in this capitalist vale of tears is reduced to the function of hastening or impeding the coming of the end of days. Hegel's world history, which permeates the Marxist ethic, is not a moral spectacle: it tramples underfoot many a noble flower in the achievement of its goal, the triumph of the Idea. By contrast, though Jehovah's ways are unfathomable, no true follower of the commandments of the God of Israel is ever destroyed with the blind indifference of the Hegelian and Marxist historical process. Though Marx may graphically depict the sufferings of a dehumanized proletariat under the factory system and the victims of bourgeois military repression in the Paris Commune, deaths in the class struggle have no meaning except as testimony that the whole of precommunist history is a denial of man's humanity. The concept of "universal moral values" has only belatedly entered the vocabularies of some formerly communist societies, now in the throes of redefining their ethos. Rejection of individual moral absolutes on the ground that such virtues were bourgeois and a sham was one of the more treacherous legacies of Marx's philosophy.

In many ways Jean-Jacques Rousseau was a predecessor of Marx. Both unveiled the vices of their societies, Rousseau to end in the impasse of the general will, Marx to herald the dictatorship of the proletariat as a necessary transitional stage in the perfection of communist man. The executioners of the French Revolution harked back to Rousseau as their prophet, and as late as 1990 Marx remained an icon for the more ghastly police bureaucrats of commu-

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nist governments. Personal values, rights, claims counted for nothing when set beside the spectacle of a future bliss for all mankind. It may seem heavy-handed to couple Marx with the bloodthirsty tyrants who tortured and executed millions while mouthing his shibboleths. But the regimes that spoke in his name derived their justification from the idea that the individual was of no moment in the period before the dawn of true human history, the coming age of unalienated labor; and if one Soviet state after another denied the meaningfulness of individual lives during the transition, Marx cannot be spared the world-historical verdict of complicity in their crimes. His sin of omission in failing to introduce into his system restraints upon the dictatorship of the proletariat, when even a madcap like Babeuf, who originally invoked the idea, had included pleas for the exercise of mercy against enemies, is more than a minor blemish.

WHAT REMAINS OF THE MARXIST UTOPIA?

The spirit of Marx's system, which reflected his total person, was early injected into the movement he founded, and from the movement it seeped into the societies that accepted its tenets. The indigenous character of the Muscovite and Chinese empires, fashioned in the course of centuries, was still discernible in these states after they adopted Marxism; elements from their authoritarian past were fortified by the introduction of dictatorial ideas that had been embraced by the world revolutionary movement. For decades, two forces, one traditional, the other a foreign novelty, were intertwined, making it difficult to estimate their relative potency. Of late, nativist passions appear to have gathered momentum; but at the same time the rhetoric of the European Enlightenment, which China and Russia had assimilated only in a gingerly way, seems to be finding converts among some of their citizens. Since there are many chambers in the house that Marx built, the ideal of physical and psychic self-actualization as an individual human right, embedded in the Marxist utopia and long repressed, may yet find a place as a moral statement acceptable to both a secular and a religious humanism. And the breakup of the communist empire that we are presently witnessing should not blind us to the possibility, after an interlude, of the resurgence in some new habit of Marx's universalist utopia. Nation-

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alist intoxication is neither more nor less eternal in its endurance than Marx's planetary fantasy.

For the sufferings of Karl Marx the exile, we can feel compassion; for his elaborate theoretical system, benign doubt and perhaps selective approval; for the abominable practices instituted in his name, loathing. A requiem for Marx cannot ignore the iniquities of his offspring—prophets and messiahs must share the blame for the excesses of their followers—but the banner that he unfurled need not be interred with his bones. Even a skeptical utopian like myself can still believe in the worth of the guiding principle: from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.

ENDNOTES

[1]The speech, delivered in English, was first published in a German translation. The quotation is from the English rendering in Franz Mehring, *Karl Marx: The Story of his Life,* trans. Edward Fitzgerald (New York: Covici, Friede, 1935), 555.

[2]Friedrich Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science (Anti-Dühring),* trans. Emile Burns (New York: International Publishers, 1939), 309.

[3]Ibid., 307, 309–10.

[4]Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* trans. N. I. Stone, from the second German edition (New York: International Library Publishing Company, 1904), 11–12.

[5]*Marx/Engels Gesamtausgabe,* part 1, vol. 1, second half (Berlin: Marx-Engels-Verlag, 1929), 167. The significance of Marx's graduation exercises was first drawn to my attention by Arnold Künzli, *Karl Marx: Eine Psychographie* (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1966).

[6]*Marx/Engels Gesamtausgabe,* part 1, vol. 1, second half, 166.

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Leninism is a combination of two things which Europeans have kept for some centuries in different compartments of the soul—religion and business. We are shocked because the religion is new, and contemptuous because the business, being subordinated to the religion instead of the other way round, is highly inefficient.

Like other new religions, Leninism derives its power not from the multitude but from a small minority of enthusiastic converts whose zeal and intolerance make each one the equal in strength of a hundred indifferentists. Like other new religions, it is led by those who can combine the new spirit, perhaps sincerely, with seeing a good deal more than their followers, politicians with at least an average dose of political cynicism, who can smile as well as frown, volatile experimentalists, released by religion from truth and mercy but not blinded to facts and expediency, and open therefore to the charge (superficial and useless though it is where politicians, lay or ecclesiastical, are concerned) of hypocrisy. Like other new religions, it seems to take the colour and gaiety and freedom out of everyday life and to offer a drab substitute in the square wooden faces of its devotees. Like other new religions, it persecutes without justice or pity those who actively resist it. Like other new religions, it is unscrupulous. Like other new religions, it is filled with missionary ardour and oecumenical ambitions. But to say that Leninism is the faith of a persecuting and propagating minority of fanatics led by hypocrites is, after all, to say no more nor less than that it *is* a religion and not merely a party, and Lenin a Mahomet, not a Bismarck. If we want to frighten ourselves in our capitalist easy-chairs, we can picture the Communists of Russia as though the early Christians led by Attila were using the equipment of the Holy Inquisition and the Jesuit missions to enforce the literal economics of the New Testament; but when we want to comfort ourselves in the same chairs, can we hopefully repeat that these economics are fortunately so contrary to human nature that they cannot finance either missionaries or armies and will surely end in defeat?

John Maynard Keynes
From "A Short View of Russia," 1925

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S. N. Eisenstadt

The Breakdown of Communist Regimes and the Vicissitudes of Modernity

I

THE BREAKDOWN OF THE COMMUNIST REGIMES in Eastern Europe has been one of the more dramatic events in the history of mankind, certainly one of the most dramatic since the end of the Second World War. What is the significance? Are these revolutions like "the great revolutions"—the English civil war, the American, French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions—which in many ways ushered in modernity, creating the modern political order?[1] Are they likely to lead—after a possibly turbulent period of transition—to a relatively stable world of modernity, with liberal constitutionalism heralding some kind of "end of history"? Or do they tell us something of the vicissitudes and fragilities of modernity, even of democratic-constitutional regimes.

II

In one sense, obviously, the breakdown of the communist regimes are revolutions—drastic, dramatic changes of regime. These changes, unlike many of the regime changes in Latin American or South Asian history, were closely connected with crucial ideological and cultural transformations. The revolutionary process itself, the social process that brought about these changes, shows interesting parallels with what happened in the "classical" revolutions. A combination of popular uprisings with struggles at the center—struggles that focused

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around various attempts at reform, started during Andropov's short regime, especially between "conservatives and reformists"—were very serious indeed. These struggles, combined with wider popular uprisings, together helped topple the communist regime.[2]

Another element common to both these changes and the great revolutions was the crucially important role of intellectuals. They played a vital part in the breakdown of the communist regimes—as the Puritans had in England, as intellectuals did to some degree in America. It is scarcely necessary to emphasize the role played by the different clubs of the Enlightenment in the French Revolution, or the contributions of the Russian intelligentsia.[3] Major intellectual figures like Havel, less well-known Catholic priests in Poland, and a variety of East German Protestant ministers were conspicuous in all these late-twentieth-century processes, so much so that the claim was often made that the breakdown of the communist regimes was indeed the work of intellectuals. While various intellectual groups were important, their mode of activity, as well as their basic orientation, was not that of intellectuals in the classical revolutions.

Their participation in hastening the process of the breakdown of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe did much to intensify the element of principled protest in all these revolutions. The popular protest was not just a protest against wrongdoing by the authorities, a demand for redress, for better behavior. In addition to all such demands, there were highly principled statements made in the name of liberty—what was often called civil society—promulgated essentially by intellectuals. As in the classical revolutions, this principled protest helped bring the regimes down. The combination of political activity by many different groups—with participation by intellectuals—attests to a strong historical and phenomenological relationship with those great revolutions that ushered in modern political life, in which such combinations were central.

Similarly, the processes that brought about the demise of these regimes—the combination of economic decline, together with a deterioration of their international standing, and the growing awareness among large sectors of the population of the sharp contradictions between the bases of their legitimation and their actual performance—were to some extent reminiscent of those common to the classical revolutions.

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III

The similarities, where they exist, are striking and by no means accidental. Still, differences are no less obvious—especially those related to new types of technology, particularly in communication—evident in the role television played in all these revolutions. Yet, even in this respect, the differences ought not to be exaggerated. While there was no television or even radio to record or comment on the events of the great revolutions, influencing them, the invention of printing and the use of the presses for political purposes played a crucial role in all the earlier revolutions.

Of greater importance, certainly, is that the repudiated economic structures, developed by the East European regimes, were characterized by a relatively modern, industrialized political economy; the revolutions did not constitute a rebellion or protest against a traditional authoritarian *ancien régime,* a protest in the name of enlightenment and reason against a long-constituted political authority.

Beyond these differences in background and causes, in their respective concrete historical settings, there were far-reaching differences in the revolutionary process itself. First, it would be difficult to say whether these were bourgeois or proletarian revolutions. Even in respect to the classical revolutions, these definitions are not always helpful or enlightening; in respect to the events in Eastern Europe they are meaningless. If there were specific social sectors predominant in bringing down these regimes, they included some intellectuals, certain potential professionals, sometimes abetted by workers, who did not appear to be the bearers of any very strong class consciousness.

Another difference must be noted. With the exception of Romania, the process was relatively bloodless, nonviolent. Where protest and violent demonstrations occurred, they were in comparative perspective very limited. Nor was the violence, when it happened, sanctified or sacralized, as it had been in most of the classical revolutions. There was no such extolling of violence either in Eastern Europe or in the USSR itself. It was the other way around—those who were opposed to the communist regimes accused the incumbents of having recourse to violence, to suppress those who would unseat them.[4]

Although ethnic and national tensions were strong in all these societies, ethnic violence was uncommon—except in the single instance of Yugoslavia—in the process that brought these regimes

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down. Only later, after their downfall, did such conflicts become much more prominent.

The relatively low level of violence is evident in the fact that the old rulers, except in Romania, were pushed out in a bloodless way. They were rarely punished; few were tried. Even in Germany, where there was talk of bringing Honnecker to court, nothing happened; the Soviets took him away, and only now are East German officials being brought before a general (not East) German court. It is significant that it is mostly in Germany—where the distinct East German state was abolished—that the most widespread legal proceedings are being undertaken. Meanwhile, Zhuvkov is now being tried in Bulgaria, and some further developments in this direction will perhaps take place. There will probably be more court cases, there will probably be some witch hunting, but it is very doubtful whether there will be anything like the trials of Charles I or Louis XVI, the "semi trial" of George III in America, or the execution of the czar.

The ruling elites of these regimes (again with the exception of Romania) did not generally fight; they gave up, abdicating relatively easily. Many would certainly have tried to hold on to power had they been able to depend on Soviet tanks to support them. Yet, the relative ease with which the rulers, and not only those at the top, but in the middle echelons of the party and the bureaucracy, gave up, or were prepared, as in Hungary or Bulgaria, to try their fortunes in new open parliamentary elections, is somewhat surprising. Of special interest, certainly, is the fact that the middle echelons of the security forces of the armies no longer protected the rulers or the regimes. They surrendered power quickly, and not because they had lost a war. This is intriguing, especially when one recalls that many of these middle echelons benefited greatly from the regimes—that the security organization and the armies were major avenues of social mobility. Yet, often, the various echelons in these organizations, gave up—willingly or unwillingly—without resistance. Similarly, it is very important to note that almost all the changes of regime were made within the framework of existing political institutions, prevailing constitutions. Even the initial constitutional changes, including the most dramatic—the abolition of the monopoly of the Communist Party—were effected or ratified in the legislative frameworks of the preceding regimes, in the existing parliaments. There was no need to change the whole structure of government to create entirely new constitutional

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frameworks for this to be done. To no small degree, it was accomplished through processes prescribed by the existing constitutions, or by extra-parliamentary consultations later ratified by the parliaments.

While new constitutions are now being negotiated, and constitutional commissions have been set up to do this work, this is intended to highlight the break with the past. Still, it is impossible to ignore the fact that change was effected relatively peacefully within the framework of existing constitutional institutions. It is much too early to know how stable any of these constitutional arrangements will be.

The same is true of the symbolic changes effected, for instance in Hungary, where the communist symbols were removed everywhere, or in Poland, where some expect the crown to be put back on the Polish eagle, removed by the communist regime. The name of the Czechoslovak Republic, changed to the Republic of the Czechs and Slovaks, heralds other important symbolic and radical structural changes that may soon be instituted. Yet, most or all of these changes were effected within existing constitutional frameworks, through existing constitutional procedures and processes—or, at a minimum, ratified by these procedures. Very few changes were made in other ways. These facts emphasize, of course, the far-reaching differences from the way in which the classical revolutions of another age developed.

IV

So, also, the political, social, and cultural programs promulgated by these revolutions are radically different from those of the past. In all these, the earlier charismatic and utopian elements are conspicuously missing.[5] While ideological demands for freedom and a market economy were made—which do indeed contain some vague "utopian" nonrealistic expectations—the market economy was never sanctified in the manner in which the "rights of man" figured in the French Revolution. There was no totalistic, utopian vision rooted in eschatological expectations of a new type of society. The vision or visions promulgated in Central and Eastern Europe, calling for freedom from repressive totalitarian or authoritarian regimes, relied on various pragmatic adjustments. Eschatological visions, the idea of creating a new total cultural and social order according to some

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utopian prescription, and oriented to some millenial future, were very feeble throughout these last years.[6]

The absence of this utopian or eschatological component was closely related to yet another crucial difference, having to do with the attitude of the revolutionary groups toward the center, toward the construction of a new center. In all the classical revolutions, the utopian and eschatological visions, together with the sanctification of violence, promoted a very strong tendency to charismatize politics. The classical revolutionaries believed that politics could change society; that through the charismatic reconstruction of the political center, a total change of society could be effected. There is very little of such charismatization of the center or of politics in these East European revolutions, though some elements of such belief can be found. Similarly, any tendency to reconstruct the center as a continuous liminal arena remains very weak.[7]

In other words, the Jacobin element, so crucial in all the classical revolutions, certainly in the Puritan (English) one, though milder in America, but very strong in the French and even more in the Russian and Chinese revolutions, which constituted a central core in all the totalitarian communist regimes, is almost entirely missing, though its head reappears here and there from time to time. Indeed, it is "antipolitics"—the flight from central politics as espoused by Gyorgi Konrad and many others—that seems to be much more in vogue today in Eastern and Central Europe.[8]

Another component of classical revolutions almost wholly missing in Eastern Europe today is that of universalistic visions, emphasizing the missionary role of such visions. While the breakdown of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe was seen by participants and others as having universal significance—a fact continuously emphasized by the media, especially television—these occurrences did not impose revolutionary missions. They were not ideas borne by missionary zealots. While there were continuous contacts between different protest movements and indeed common consultations, no distinctive missionary universalistic utopian vision developed, redolent of the French and Russian revolutions, or of the Puritan revolt. No revolutionary armies walked about from one place to another hoping to reshape their respective societies.[9]

When Havel came to Poland he did not bring an army to revolutionize Poland; he came as head of a friendly neighboring state,

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to speak before the Polish Sejm. There was no new revolutionary International; only a plethora of discussion groups, seminars, and the like, with a very strong emphasis on common themes, such as civil society, freedom, constitutional democracy, and—to some extent—the free market. There was no strong missionary universalistic push, a core element in many of the great revolutions, especially in France and Russia. Accordingly, the future is much more open. As there is no utopian sanctification of politics, the future is not prescribed by totalistic utopian visions with strong missionary orientations. The weakness of the utopian and missionary elements was closely related to the basic character of intellectuals, the *Kulturträger,* who were active, very often central, but no longer pursuing the roles characteristic of intellectuals in the great revolutions, or in many of the major modern social movements.

The vision they represented had changed from the classical revolutionary one, as indeed had many of their activities. Most of these East European intellectuals grew up and were active—even if frequently suppressed and mostly highly regulated—in the framework of modern academic, professional, or literary institutions recognized to be betraying some of their principal ideals. While often rebelling against the totalistic utopian visions in the name of which the communist regimes legitimized themselves, some were openly pragmatic; others talked in the name of freedom, extolling the ideals of civil society and private morality. They were no longer bearers of the strong Jacobin eschatological visions characteristic of so many of the classical revolutionary intellectuals.

Other actors, wholly secondary in the great revolutions—above all the bearers of national, ethnic, and to some extent religious visions and messages—have become much more important. Primordial and religious themes played a crucial role, not only in Poland, where the church had always been strong, but in other places as well. Certain of the churches in East Germany played a major role in the overthrow of the regime, even if not as dramatically as in Poland.

V

How can one explain these revolutionary changes in Eastern Europe? Are they to be discovered in the "causes" alleged to explain the breakdown of communist regimes? Among the causes commonly

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given, the stagnation of the economy, the disenchantment among large sectors of the population, the weakening of the legitimation of these regimes, and their diminished international standing are singled out.

While many of the causes of the decline of the Soviet system—the various manifestations of internal stagnation and of weakness in the international arena—are redolent of the decline of many empires, including those which spawned the great classical revolutions, they do not tell enough. Just as such general causes do not distinguish between empires, the Roman, Byzantine, and Abbasid, for example, or the dynastic changes in China, (especially the decline of the Ming), or the others which gave rise to the great revolutions, they do not explain the specific reasons for the decline of the communist regimes.[10] Also, they do not suggest the directions these societies may now take.

In order to be able to explain what has happened, it is imperative to look closely at the specific contradictions of these regimes, that were in fact at the very core of their legitimation. On the most general level, these contradictions were rooted in the fact that the Soviet regime, as it developed after its institutionalization in the early 1920s, was characterized by a rather unusual combination of features. It combined "traditional" features—historical, patrimonial, and bureaucratic features characteristic especially, of course, of the czarist empire—with those of a modern regime mobilizing whole populations, rooted in a monolithic revolutionary movement and ideology.[11]

The Soviet regime changed some of the basic parameters of center-periphery relations that had developed under the czarist empire—especially the rather delicate balance between a commitment to the imperial system and the relative political passivity of the periphery. The revolutionary center mobilized and activated the periphery to a very high degree, but at the same time attempted to control it tightly in the name of the communist salvationist vision as borne and promulgated by the ruling elite and its cadres.

Accordingly, the most far-reaching—the most encompassing and crucial—contradictions developed in these regimes were rooted in their bases of legitimation, in the nature of the vision that combined the basic premises of modernity, together with far-reaching strong totalitarian orientations and policies. The most important of these contradictions were between the participatory democratic and the

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totalitarian, the Jacobin components of the legitimation of these regimes; between the high level of social mobilization effected by these regimes and the attempts to control totally all the mobilized groups.

These contradictions became increasingly apparent after the Stalinist era, but to some extent also after Khrushchev, the time of intensive social mobilization and institution building undertaken in the name of this vision. As Ernest Gellner has pointed out, the exigencies of the routinization of this vision, which became ever more visible after the Khrushchev era, highlighted the contradictions inherent in these communist regimes.[12]

The first arena in which the contradictions became apparent was the economic one—the failure of the planned economy to deliver according to its premises. The growing stagnation of the Brezhnev era constituted the turning point in the articulation of the economic problems of the Soviet regime. The stagnation, brought about by the general inefficiency of central planning in regulating a relatively routinized and diversified modern economy, was exacerbated by the extremely heavy burden of military expenses. Rooted in the strong military orientations of the regime, and in the growth of the military as an autonomous sector of the Soviet society and economy, but also, during the Brezhnev era, in the great military and economic expenses incurred in connection with Soviet international policy in the period of the Cold War, there was a growing tendency of the regime to buy off various sectors of the society through subsidized privileges.

The failure in the economic arena touched on the central nerve of the regime—it was in the economic arena that the salvationist vision of the regime was to be implemented; it was the economic arena that provided the most telling test of the regime's vision.

The contradictions inherent in these policies might have been suppressed by a strong totalitarian regime—but at the same time the consequences of such suppression would have weakened many aspects of the system. Once the totalitarian lid was taken off—as happened under Gorbachev—the contradictions exploded, threatening the very existence of the system.

VI

The contradictions of these regimes explain some of the major characteristics of the civil society that developed within them, and in

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this context it is essential to examine the processes of economic development and social mobilization that became rooted under communism.[13] The continuous processes of social mobilization, the expansion of education, and the growth of numerous professional groups and organizations created in Soviet Russia a much greater range of nuclei, the kernels of civil society. At the same time, however, civil society was not allowed any autonomy, not even to the extent that it was allowed under the czars.[14] The totalitarian control effected by the Soviet regime almost entirely eroded all the bases of autonomy of civil society that existed.

Still, certain institutional ideological kernels of the civil society could be found in the existence of formal, seemingly legal procedures in many institutions and organizations. Even though these procedures were often only formally acceded to, their existence served as a sort of signal about the proper ways of dealing in the public arena.

The ideological kernels of such civil society were rooted in some of the basic premises of these regimes—especially in their emphasis on freedom, emancipation, and participation in the political arena, which constituted major components of the communist vision. While these emphases were repressed by the Jacobin components of the communist regimes, the latter could never entirely negate or obliterate these themes. These nuclei or kernels of civil society started to develop as some of the basic contradictions of these regimes became more apparent, but also more debilitating.

The growing attempt of the regime to buy off large sectors of the more educated and professional sectors of the society gave rise to one of the major initial directions of the development of civil society in Russia, the Soviet Union, and even more widely in Eastern Europe. Greater spaces were provided in which these sectors were permitted some sort of semi-autonomous activities, but never in the central political arena.

With the continuous weakening of the regimes and the growth, within the ruling sectors, of an awareness of the necessity to reform, more active attempts to impinge on the central political arena started to develop in a great variety of ways. At the same time, it is not clear to what extent orderly constitutional procedures in the central arena would develop or would be adhered to.

Such kernels of civil society were stronger in Eastern Europe, where totalitarian communist rule was of much shorter duration,

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where certain institutional and ideological traditions of civil society were stronger—even if not especially strong in comparison with those of Western Europe.

Similarly, given the shorter span of communist rule, the stronger traditions of parliamentary regimes and the existence, as in the case of the Catholic Church in Poland, of a number of autonomous sectors, all these developments were much stronger in the communist regimes in Eastern Europe than in Russia—and it is in these countries that they became central in bringing down the communist regimes.[15]

VII

The specific characteristics of the contradictions of the Soviet and communist regimes provide the starting point for possible explanations of the East European revolutions or regime changes that distinguish them from all the classical revolutions. These revolutions were not oriented against "traditional," premodern, or even modernizing regimes. They were not rebellions or protests against traditional authoritarian regimes, against the divine right of kings, made in the name of modernity or enlightenment. Rather, they constituted a rebellion and protest against what was increasingly perceived by large sectors of the East European societies as a blockage and distortion of modernity, effected by totalitarian regimes. While these regimes blocked and in many ways distorted modernity and development, in some of their basic, symbolic, and institutional aspects, they were very modern societies.

In common with other modern regimes, the legitimation of these regimes was rooted in earlier "classical" types of revolutionary experience (the English, American, and French)—the legitimation of the new center was couched in terms which entailed far-reaching transformations of center-periphery relations. There developed a growing permeation of the center into the periphery, but also the impingement of the periphery on the center, often culminating in the obliteration of at least the symbolic differences between center and periphery, making membership in the collectivity tantamount to participation in the center.[16]

The modernity of these regimes is paradoxically most evident in the fact that all of them promulgated elections. While it is of course true that the elections were a sham, as were the constitutions, one

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must ask why the czars opposed elections while the Soviet leaders imposed them. They required elections because the regime's legitimacy, couched in modern political terms, accepted the necessity of political participation; appeals to something like the divine right of kings was unthinkable. The "divine" was the voice of the people, a secular eschatological vision borne by the people or an imaginary sector thereof—the proletariat or the like. Accordingly, these regimes promulgated modern constitutions, even if in practice they were as much a sham as the elections themselves. Both the constitutions and the elections attested to the fact that these totalitarian regimes, in their mode of legitimation, in their relations between the center and the periphery, but also in their overall cultural and political program, were modern regimes. Indeed, their cultural and political program was part of the cultural pattern of modernity.

The specific political and cultural policies promulgated by these regimes developed out of tensions inherent in the cultural programs of modernity—especially the tensions between the Jacobin and liberal or pluralistic elements of this program. These Jacobin orientations, with their belief in the transformation of society through totalistic political action, are very modern, even if their historical roots go back to medieval eschatological sources.

The Jacobin element exists in different guises—in many populist, fundamentalist, or fascist movements—and indeed in all modern societies, including those that are democratic-constitutional. It exists also in nationalist movements. As Noberto Bobbio has often emphasized, the Jacobin element is strong in both fascism and in communism, which in a way are mirror images of one another.[17]

In pluralistic, constitutional societies—in the United States, England, or France—this Jacobin element is hemmed in; it constitutes only a single component in the overall pluralistic constitutional arrangements. In totalitarian regimes, the pluralistic ideologies and structures were repressed almost totally, but never entirely obliterated. The fact of such repression meant that severe contradictions developed not only in respect to economic performance, but also in respect to basic political premises.

VIII

From the point of view of social and economic conditions or institutions, the communist societies were not traditional or under-

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developed societies in the sense in which that term is used to designate the so-called Third World—itself a highly heterogeneous entity. Their economic structures were those of a relatively industrialized and urbanized political economy. Moreover, their distinctive mode of industrialization became connected with widespread social mobilization and the expansion of education, conditions that did not always obtain in the Third World. A pretense of equality, even if very shabby, evolved. With respect to the middle and lower groups, it was not only pretense.

These institutional developments—the expansion of education, the controlled but potentially meaningful possibility of political participation, and their connection to industrialization—were created by the regime itself. They were not external to the regime; they generated the major contradictions in the regimes. The Soviet and communist societies were not simply backward and underdeveloped, aspiring to become modern. Rather, they were modern or modernizing societies, which, in seeking to catch up with the more developed, selected and totalized the Jacobin ideological and institutional elements of modernity.

Thus, the revolutions against the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and against the totalitarian regime in Russia need to be seen as rebellions against certain types of modernity which negated in practice other more pluralistic elements of modernity, while officially instituting certain central components of their premises. The rebellions or revolutionary processes, as much as the various attempts at reform, together with the new social and political movements in what had once been the USSR, were rebellions or protests against a misrepresentation of modernity, a flawed interpretation of modernity. They were an unfolding of the dynamics of modern civilization.

IX

It is the specifically modern contradictions of these regimes that provide the beginning of an explanation for why the various ruling groups—and not only the top rulers, but also the middle echelons of the bureaucracy, army, and security forces—gave up so easily. All were highly mobilized and underwent intense processes of political socialization. Politically the most socialized groups of the regime, they were socialized in the name of two quite different components or orientations. One was Jacobin, the eschatological element trans-

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formed into a totalitarian setting. They were also socialized in the name of freedom, participation, and democracy—even if these elements were subverted and suppressed. This specific political socialization could easily, under appropriate conditions, intensify their awareness of the contradictions between the premises of the regimes and their performance. It is difficult to know how seriously these groups took their ideals. Once things started to change, however, and the impact of foreign television became greater, the more democratic themes found easy resonance, paradoxically perhaps because of the political socialization received. This may partially explain the strong predisposition of large sectors of these societies to listen to radio and television messages from the West; it may also explain the impact of their messages.

If the downfall of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe must be explained in terms different from those of the "classical" revolutions which ushered in the political program of modernity, there are similarities: the close relations among popular protests, struggles in the center, and the intellectual groups that developed; the place of principled protest; the emphasis on the legitimacy of such protest, central in all of them. All these were characteristic features of the great revolutions; all are characteristic of the modern political process ushered in by these revolutions. From the point of view of the development of such themes, there seems to have developed in the process of breakdown of the communist regimes, a rather interesting parallelism—together with great differences in concrete details—with respect to some developments in the contemporary West, especially with respect to some of those developments which have often been dubbed as "post-modern": the decharismatization of the centers; the weakening of the overall societywide utopian political vision and of the missionary-ideological component. Even when the belief in democracy and the free market sometimes evince such elements, there is a concomitant disposition of many utopian orientations to disperse; "daily" and semi-private spheres of life become central.[18]

X

The fact that the breakdown of these regimes seems to lead to the institutionalization of new and on the face of it democratic-constitu-

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tional regimes—more modern societies—does not mean that such institutionalization will be easy. It is now fully recognized that the transition is fragile. Many economic pitfalls, great social turbulence and dislocations attendant on the transition from the communist command economy to some free market type, the weakness in East European countries of constitutional and democratic traditions, and the continuous threat of the upsurge of primordial, ethnic loyalties, become increasingly apparent. There is always the possibility of economic collapse and general anarchy.

These problems, however, do not simply arise out of the breakdown of "traditional" empires, the transition from some "premodern" to fully modern, democratic society, or from a distorted modernity to a relatively tranquil stage which may well signal some kind of "end of history." The turbulence evident in Eastern Europe today bears witness to some of the problems and tensions inherent in modernity itself, attesting to the potential fragility of the whole project of modernity.

These turbulences highlight tensions inherent in the modern political process, which are indeed characteristic of this process. The most important are tensions between different and often competing conceptions of the "general will," and the relation of these conceptions to the representation of the discrete interests of various sectors of society; i.e., tensions between aggregative policies and politics of the common good, between the articulation and aggregation of different interests and of different conceptions of common good, between—to use Bruce Ackerman's formulation—the routine and "revolutionary" politics.[19]

Contrary to the assumptions of many rational-choice analysts, the mobilization of support around leaders and programs, effected mainly but not only through the medium of parties and of social movements, is not based simply on the aggregation of many discrete interests. Such mobilization also takes place around the articulation of different conceptions of the common good; it plays a central role in the mobilization of political support. Such mobilization will often focus, as Alessandro Pizzorno has shown, around symbols of collective identity—political, social, or ethnic identity—as well as around the closely related conception of the common good of the whole

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society, more closely related to the primordial and sacred components of legitimation.[20]

XI

These tensions are inherent in all modern regimes. In authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, they are suppressed but never obliterated. In relatively stable democratic-constitutional regimes, the tensions may be attenuated, but they always simmer, ready, as it were, to erupt in situations of intensive change. The tensions and potential fragility of democratic-constitutional—basically of all modern—regimes, is enhanced by the fact that modern regions develop in highly volatile and continuously changing internal and international settings. The conditions conducive to their institutionalization and continuity are themselves inherently unstable.

In any situation of rapid change, modern societies may develop rather contradictory tendencies in respect to the development of conditions conducive to institutionalization, to the perpetuation and continuity of democratic-constitutional regimes. Such situations generate changes in the definition of the boundaries of the political,[21] in what is seen to be an appropriate range of activities for the state; in the structures of centers of power; in the extent of the access of different sectors of civil society to these centers; in the nature of the linkages among the sectors, and between them and the state; in the types of entitlements extended to different sectors of society.

From the point of view of the construction of civil society and its relations to the state, in such transitional situations, developments could take several directions.[22] One would include the development of new autonomous sectors of civil society; the political activization of such sectors through the activities of multiple elites and counter-elites; the growth of various interlinking arenas between the state and society, including both the activization of "older" types, such as consultative bodies, and the development of new ones—attuned in different degrees to democratic-constitutional arrangements.

Alternatively, the processes of "transition" may develop in quite other directions. They may work to undermine the conditions favoring the development and continuity of democratic-constitutional regimes. The continuous social and economic transitions may easily change the distribution of power within the major sectors of

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society, eroding many autonomous centers of power, creating a power vacuum. Moreover, policies—such as, for instance, those connected with the institutionalization of the welfare state—whose initial aim was to weaken existing semi-monopolistic centers of power, may increase the political and administrative power of the state to such an extent as to obliterate independent bases of power. As attested by de Tocqueville, Marx, and Weber, the specter of the bureaucratization of all major arenas of social and political life has haunted the political discourse of modern societies, with an intensity only reinforced by the development of totalitarian regimes.

Other possibilities exist. Many of the existing sectors of civil society, with their complex interlinking arenas, may become impediments to the restructuring of relations between civil society and the state. The very entrenchment of these sectors may lead them increasingly to represent narrow corporative or ascriptive sectors, and may weaken their initial acceptance of newly emergent common frameworks and centers. Finally, both the older associational structure and the new sectors of civil society may become undermined, giving rise to the development of highly volatile masses. In many such cases these processes have been exacerbated by the emergence of new collective-national and ethnic communities, with ensuing internecine conflicts.

Such developments or transitions—whether from nondemocratic to democratic-constitutional regimes, or within democratic-constitutional regimes—are closely connected with tensions inherent in the modern political process between different and often competing conceptions of the general will, and the relation of such conceptions to the representation of the discrete interests of various sectors of society; i.e., tensions between aggregative policies and politics of the common good, between routine and revolutionary politics.

XII

It is in these situations, as in many involving intensive change in modern regimes, that the confrontation between the different modes of legitimation and the different aspects of the modern political process become especially acute. All such tensions and problems became highly visible in the processes of transition in Eastern Europe. Such periods of change—of transition—are in no way exceptional.

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They are, as indicated above, exceedingly common, given the continuously changing internal and international settings of the contemporary world. It is in such periods that articulations of protest come forward as a major component of the political process. The most intensive themes and movements of protest are those in which articulation of concrete aggregate interests becomes closely related to the promulgation of different conceptions of the common good.

The ubiquity of these tensions in the modern democratic-constitutional regimes points to one of the most important challenges before these regimes—namely, how to create some common framework in which different views of the common good can compete without undermining the very possibility of the system working. It poses the question of the nature of the common basis or bases of acceptance of a democratic-constitutional regime—beyond adherence to the rules of the game—and the possibility that such common elements may exist in multiple bases of legitimation, so long as no one of them becomes predominant.

The ubiquity of such tensions indicates that one of the major continuous challenges before the modern constitutional regime is not just the assurance that the major political actors will adhere to the existing rules of the game, but also their capacity to incorporate protest, to redefine the boundaries of the political, to transform the bases of legitimation of these regimes. The great crises of these regimes—such as those of the 1930s in many European countries—were usually associated with a failure to achieve such internal transformations.

The constitutional regimes of the West, since the Second World War, though not between the two world wars, evinced, despite continuous fears about the crisis of the state or capitalism, a high degree of capacity for self-transformability. In the West, no democratic regime has broken down since the end of the Second World War. Indeed, the general trend has seemed to go the other way, with the authoritarian regimes—in Spain, Portugal, Greece, and most recently, in some Latin American countries—becoming democratic. Similarly, several non-European countries—India, Japan, and Israel—have been able to maintain democratic-constitutional regimes since the end of the Second World War—as have also Germany and Italy—the two countries in which the breakdown of democracy in the interwar period was most dramatic.

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But even within these regimes the possibility of crisis or breakdown cannot be entirely discounted. This is, of course, even more true of the emerging constitutional regimes of Eastern Europe. The initial stages of the breakdown of communist regimes—the relatively peaceful characteristics which distinguished them from the great revolutions—suggested that they might also evince some such capacity for self-transformability. At the same time, however, the turbulences attendant on these transitions cast new doubts about that capacity. Such doubts are due not only to the specific conditions of these transitions, but also to the combination of conditions inherent in modern regimes, especially in democratic-constitutional ones. Thus, the developments in Eastern Europe cast important light on the problematics of modernity, on the inherent fragility of the great historical and cultural project of modernity.

ENDNOTES

[1]On the classical modern revolutions, see: S. N. Eisenstadt, *Revolutions and the Transformation of Societies* (New York: Free Press, 1978); idem, "Historical Sociology of Revolutions," *International Social Science Journal* (forthcoming, 1992); M. Lasky, "The Birth of a Metaphor: On the Origins of Utopia and Revolution," *Encounter* 34 (2) (1970): 35–45, and (3) (1970): 30–42; idem, *Utopia and Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976). On the Revolutions and modernity, see for instance the special issue "The French Revolution and the Birth of Modernity," *Social Research* (1989).

[2]See Eisenstadt, *Revolutions and the Transformation of Societies.*

[3]On the role of groups of intellectuals in some of the revolutions, see: A. Cochin, *La Revolution et la Libre Pense* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1924); idem, *L'esprit du Jacobinisme* (Paris: Universitaires de France, 1979); and J. Baechler, preface in *Cochin, L'esprit du Jacobinisme*, 7–33. See also F. Furet, *French Revolution* (New York: MacMillan, 1970); idem, *Rethinking the French Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) and V. C. Nahirny, *The Russian Intelligentsia: From Torment to Silence* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983).

[4]On the sanctification of violence in classical revolutions, see: S. N. Eisenstadt, "Historical Sociology of Revolutions," *International Social Science Journal* (forthcoming, 1992).

[5]On the Utopian elements in the great civilizations and revolutions, see: A. B. Seligman, ed., *Order and Transcendence: The Role of Utopias and the Dynamics of Civilizations* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989); M. Lasky, *Utopia and Revolution;* R. Saage, *Das Ende der Politisches Utopie?* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990).

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[7]From the vast literature on this subject, see for instance: Pietro Grilli di Corrona, "From Communism to Democracy: Rethinking Regime Change in Hungary and Czechoslovakia," *International Social Science Journal* (128) (May 1991): 315–331.

[8]G. Konrad, *Antipolotik—Mitteleuropaische Meditationen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985).

[9]On the universalistic and missionary components in the great revolutions, see: C. Lefort in Eisenstadt, *Revolutions,* R. Kosellek, "Historical Criteria of the Modern Concept of Revolutions," in idem, *Futures Past—on the Semantics of Historical Time* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), 39, and S. N. Eisenstadt, "Historical Sociology of Revolutions," *International Social Science Journal* (forthcoming, 1992).

[10]On the analysis of such cases, see: S. N. Eisenstadt, "Historical Sociology of Revolutions," *International Social Science Journal* (forthcoming, 1992); J. A. Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

[11]On the specific processes of the breakdown of the communist regime, see for instance from the literature of the West the special issue of *World Politics,* 44;(1) October 1991 ("Liberalisation and Democratization in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe"), also S. N. Eisenstadt, "Center Periphery in Soviet Russia," in A. J. Motyl, ed., *Rethinking Theoretically about Soviet Nationalities* (New York: Columbia University Press, forthcoming, 1992).

[12]Remarks made by Ernest Gellner in the seminar on Fundamentalism under the auspices of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Chicago, November 1991.

[13]See the special issue of *World Politics* mentioned in note 11 and Eisenstadt, "Center Periphery in Soviet Russia."

[14]On civil society in the czarist empire, see for instance E. W. Clowes, S. D. Kassow, and J. L. West, eds., *Between Tsar and People* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

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[15]P. Grilli di Cortona, *From Communism to Democracy;* also idem, *Le Crisi politiche nei regimi communisti* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1980).

[16]On the concept of center, see E. Shils, "Center and Periphery" in idem, *Center and Periphery, Essays in Macrosociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 3–34. On center-periphery relations on modernity, see S.N. Eisenstadt, *Tradition, Change and Modernity* (New York: John Wiley, 1973), chaps. 9–11, 203–258, and idem, "Post-Traditional Societies and the Continuity and Reconstruction of Tradition," in S. N. Eisenstadt, ed., *Post-Traditional Societies* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), 1–29. On the general prospect of modernity, see J. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987).

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[19]A. Przeworski, "Democracy as a Contingent Outcome of Conflicts," in J. Elster and R. Slagstad, eds., *Constitutionalism and Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Norwegian University Press, 1988), 59–81. Ackerman, "Neo Federalism?" 153–195. J. Nedelsky, "American Constitutionalism and the Paradox of Private Property," 241–275. J. Lambert, *Tocqueville et les deux democraties* (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1983).

[20]A. Pizzorno, *I Soggetti del Pluralismo Classi Partiti Sindacati* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980).

[21]See Charles S. Maier, ed., *Changing Boundaries of the Political* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[22]See S. N. Eisenstadt, "Introduction" in idem, ed., *Democracy and Modernity,* International Colloquium on the Centenary of David Ben Gurion (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991), vii-xiv.

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One can say that three pre-eminent qualities are decisive for the politician: passion, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion. . .

To be sure, mere passion, however genuinely felt, is not enough. It does not make a politician, unless passion as devotion to a 'cause' also makes responsibility to this cause the guiding star of action. And for this, a sense of proportion is needed. This is the decisive psychological quality of the politician: his ability to let realities work upon him with inner concentration and calmness. Hence his *distance* to things and men. 'Lack of distance' *per se* is one of the deadly sins of every politician. It is one of those qualities the breeding of which will condemn the progeny of our intellectuals to political incapacity. For the problem is simply how can warm passion and a cool sense of proportion be forged together in one and the same soul? Politics is made with the head, not with other parts of the body or soul. And yet devotion to politics, if it is not to be frivolous intellectual play but rather genuinely human conduct, can be born and nourished from passion alone. However, that firm taming of the soul, which distinguishes the passionate politician and differentiates him from the 'sterilely excited' and mere political dilettante, is possible only through habituation to detachment in every sense of the word. The 'strength' of a political 'personality' means, in the first place, the possession of these qualities of passion, responsibility, and proportion.

Max Weber
From "Politics as a Vocation," 1919

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Leszek Kolakowski

Amidst Moving Ruins

EUPHORIA IS ALWAYS BRIEF, whatever causes it. The "post-communist" euphoria is over and the premonitions of imminent dangers are mounting. The monster is dying in its own monstrous way. Shall we see another monster take its place, a series of bloody struggles between its various remnants? How many new countries will emerge from the chaos and what will they be: democratic, dictatorial, national-fascist, clerical, civilized, barbaric? Will millions of refugees, escaping from famine and war, stampede into Europe? Every day newspapers provide gloomy warnings; many are written by knowledgeable people. The only thing we know for certain: nothing is certain; nothing is impossible.

PREDICTING THE UNPREDICTABLE

And when we say "nothing is certain" we mean a modest, humanly accessible certainty ("moral assurance," as Descartes would have it) and not the perfect certainty that is beyond human reach. We are now told by scientists that in various natural processes some minuscule events may trigger, unpredictably, large-scale catastrophic changes and "unpredictable" results. To foresee them, one needs not just a better, more detailed knowledge of initial conditions but the absolute knowledge that only the divine mind can possibly possess.

Historical processes are like that. "Laws of history" and "historical inevitability" are Hegelian-Marxist fakes. There was no historical necessity in that relatively weak Athenian infantry defeating the powerful Persian army at Marathon. Had the Greeks lost—as any

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outside observer must have rationally expected—there would have been no history of Europe as we now know it. No historical laws prevented Mohammed from being killed before his escape from Mecca; none ordered Martin Luther, an obscure monk from a provincial town, to initiate the debate about who is entitled to forgive sins. There was no inevitability in the success of the Bolshevik revolution—indeed an unpredictable coincidence of many accidents assured its victory—or the Red Army's defeat by the Poles in 1920 and failure to conquer Europe, or Hitler's establishment of dictatorship in Germany. These momentous historical events were produced by chance, or if one prefers, by miraculous interventions of Providence.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to explain how such miracles were prepared by the course of events that preceded them; such explanations are easy; it is reasonable to say that none of these events was miraculous to such an extent that it might have happened at any time, in any place, in any circumstance. The circumstances, however, made them possible, but by no means necessary. We often discern certain "trends" that we expect will one day culminate in a catastrophe (in the original sense of "upturn," sometimes destructive, sometimes beneficial), when the trajectory of a movement is suddenly broken. But we are never able—except, occasionally on a very short time scale—of predicting the character, pace, or timetable of break. Of course, in most of our actions, consciously or otherwise, we make predictions; and most often we are not disappointed. We naturally assume that tomorrow will be very much like today; this in fact is the safest way of moving through life. Most frequently tomorrow is indeed very much like today—the sun rises; there is no snow in summer.

While many people did in fact predict the collapse of the Soviet empire, and proved to be right, were they really especially wise or more abundantly endowed with the gift of prophecy than those who expected its indefinite duration? The present author, having made such predictions on many occasions, in very general terms, but never on timing and pace, in asking such questions may not be thought to wish to justify himself. He would rather boast of being among the credible prophets. The predictions have indeed been borne out, but on what basis were they originally made? To say simply that all earlier empires eventually fell, is unhelpful, meaningless, as some

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survived in good health for centuries. Certainly, one could (and did) notice a number of serious tensions—insoluble problems—enfeebling and corroding the multinational Soviet tyranny: glaring economic inefficiency; persistent poverty in the population; nationalist passions; the crisis of legitimacy once the ruling ideology had lost the last remnants of its vitality; the growing technological gap between the territories of "real socialism" and democratic countries; various symptoms of cultural and religious revival.

Still, none of those observable facts or tendencies—or all of them jointly—could justify predictions about the immediate future. Where there is decay, one may expect death one day, but no one can be really sure about the forces of resilience remaining in the aging body before it turns into a corpse. As the ancient saying goes, nobody is so old that he could not survive for one more year. People have lived in misery for decades; why not decades more? National passions have always been present, but Russification was able to progress as well. Communist ideology was dying, but might it not be feasible to maintain the despotic power without ideology? The technological gap was growing, but the army and police seemed to be intact, technically skilled. The "dissident" movement existed but did not extend beyond a few dozen individuals; it was nearly destroyed by persecution. Many people reasoned in this way; the course of events made fools of them. Why were "we" right and "they" wrong? Because they bet on the safest way of predicting, tomorrow will be very much like today; "we" had good reasons to make an apparently riskier wager, and we won. Why?

A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNISM

After Stalin's death the totalitarian *will* to power survived, but its effectiveness and skill in enforcing slavery grew weaker and weaker, all the regressions and U-turns notwithstanding. A tyrannical regime, suddenly made ashamed of mass slaughter, that seeks to replace it with selective terror is doomed. Genocidal measures were no longer practicable—as they had been under Iosif Vissarionowitch's rule—where all layers of the ruling apparatus, even the highest and the most privileged, were affected. The safety of the rulers allowed for a more relative and more fragile control of the ruled, on the condition that they agreed to be obedient, passive, and ignorant, and made no

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attempt to revolt. In addition to a measure of physical safety, a minimum of moral safety was also instituted.

A small example will illustrate the change. When I visited Moscow in October 1990, a Russian friend called my attention to a simple fact, the significance of which I had failed to notice. It was known that under Khrushchev a relatively large-scale housing construction program had been developed in the cities; people in great numbers secured their family dwellings. However small and inferior in standard, they gave people space for privacy, little nooks to breathe in. My Russian friend told me that without these modest but individual flats no opposition movement would have been possible. How foolish of Khrushchev! People crammed like sardines in miserable workers' barracks or in small flats shared by several families, hating each other and spying on each other, jostling all the time and deprived of all moments of privacy, were unlikely to think about anything but sheer survival. The improvement of living conditions turned out to be politically dangerous. Far from appeasing people, making them more docile, as certain Sovietologists expected, such measures slowly opened up a space for critical thinking, ultimately for rebellion. A slightly reduced misery made misery more painful; it operated to release the energy of revolt. Many observers (apart from a number of experts) have known this from a study of history.

The most active and fearless Soviet rebels of the 1960s were dispatched to concentration camps and psychiatric prisons or forced to emigrate; some were murdered. Many experts heaved a sigh of relief: we told you so; a handful of madmen; tomorrow will be like today. It was not to be; the Soviet intelligentsia was never to lose what it had gained (or to regain what it had lost): the ridiculous emptiness of the Marxist-Leninist ideology was denounced and spectacularly displayed for all to see.

And what about the repeated revolts and uprisings on the peripheries of the empire? Again, they were shrugged off by many experts: such agitation was pointless; do you know how many tanks the Soviet army has, and how many Poland and Hungary can command? And troops, and airplanes? How many days do you imagine the supply of fuel will last in Poland? Experts read newspapers with occasional reports on CIA assessments of Soviet bloc military performance. Indeed, given the absence of fuel, tanks, and airplanes, was there any point to revolt? Keep silent, you silly Poles, Czechs,

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Hungarians; the Yalta agreement holds; nobody will help you; the curtain is everlasting; tomorrow will be like today; keep silent and you may make your life better; revolt, and you will be crushed. The experts have spoken.

It must be stressed that most often the revolts, when they occurred and had an ideological articulation, were ostensibly socialist. Apart from a few individuals with the reputation of being eccentric, who, before the late 1980s, would have thought to demand the reprivatization of industry? What did the Poles in 1956 and the Czechs in 1968 want but a better, economically efficient socialism, tolerant in cultural matters, neither oppressive nor mendacious? The Hungarian revolution of 1956 was triggered by the second funeral of Laszlo Rajk; Rajk was a Stalinist hangman tortured to death by other Stalinist hangmen. The last stage of the Polish opposition movement started at the end of 1975 with protests against amendments to the constitution that were intended practically to inscribe into law Poland's membership in the Soviet bloc and the permanence of the Party dictatorship; ostensibly, the protesters defended the integrity of the Stalinist constitution of 1952.

But the Soviets knew better; they were not easily fooled. And they were right. They knew that "socialism with a human face" was, for all practical purposes, no socialism, at least no socialism in the sense they conceived it, a socialism defined by the arbitrary dictatorship of the Party, the lack of civil liberties, and the overall nationalization of everything, including people's minds, historical knowledge, every means of communication, all human relationships. That they were right has been glaringly borne out by recent events: an attempt to produce a "communism with a human face" in the Soviet Union resulted in no communism at all, no face to look at. Is the crocodile with a human face possible, Soviet skeptics asked, after the pathetic Czechoslavak experience?

Even when we accept that unexpected events do often occur, and that the life routine is disturbed (the refrigerator breaks down, a friend suddenly dies of a heart attack, there is a civil war in a "far-away country of which we know very little"), the principle that "tomorrow will be very much like today" is not only the easiest and mentally the safest to adopt, but also the most rational as well. We could not survive without having it embedded in our minds. Having lived for many years in peace, we admit that a war may happen, but

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we do not really believe it. The Soviet superpower was indeed a dangerous animal, but its behavior was known; the Western powers were generally aware of what to expect. Still, surprises did happen, such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. To anyone familiar with the history of the empire, with the possible exception of President Carter, there was nothing in that event at all out of keeping with the principal patterns of Soviet policy. The world was a place full of hazard; but once the machine became deregulated, we felt that the perils increased, though at first glance, the opposite seemed to be the case, particularly when imperialism fell to pieces. The little certainty we habitually enjoyed was lost; our routine reactions did not fit into an unfamiliar environment; our sight was clouded and instead of rejoicing, various sinister future scenarios were imagined, none of which was entirely impossible. The continuity has been broken; until a new kind of fragile stability appears, there will be more panic than peace of mind.

There were many energies at work that contributed to the final demise of the empire. One, however modest, was the presence of individuals who obstinately predicted its disintegration. Those who foresaw its indefinite vitality contributed—willingly or not—to its perpetuation. It is known, of course, that in political and economic affairs predictions are never wholly innocent. We are not like meteorologists and we influence the object spoken of. Those who predicted the sorry end of the empire in the not-too-distant future almost invariably wished it to happen. Those who believed in its perpetuity were more differentiated: some were fellow-travelers; some simply accepted and approved the permanence of the existing division of the world and cheerfully (scientifically, to be sure) pointed out all the symptoms of the oncoming "convergence"; some, while hostile to the communist system, believed it to be so immensely strong that short of global war nothing would crush it.

It is perhaps more accurate to say that the perpetuity-mongers were more mistaken than that the death-prophets (or death-wishers) were clairvoyant. The latter were unable to pack together into one equation the heterogeneous factors that corroded the seemingly immovable, cardboard palace of communism and correctly calculated the date on which it would crumble; for that, they can hardly be

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blamed. The former simply refused to see, and to discern what was perfectly visible; they may be blamed for that self-inflicted blindness.

WHAT DID MIKHAIL SERGEEVITCH DO?

Since the causes of the catastrophe were many and disparate, both internal and external, it is vain to seek for the "main cause," the "weightiest factor"; the same needs to be said about all historical earthquakes.

Among the many factors, the personal contribution of Mikhail Gorbachev cannot be omitted, though it is evident that he both shaped events and was shaped by them. He did not come to power in order to dismantle the empire and communist institutions. Repeatedly—and incredibly up to the moment when he ordered the dissolution of the Communist Party—he declared his allegiance to communism. What this meant, nobody, including himself, could say, but it was probably not just an attempt to placate "conservatives," "hardliners," "Stalinists," "reactionaries," "hawks,"—no word is quite accurate; he clearly meant something, however vague his formulations. Inevitably, he was seen by some as a cunning Soviet strategist seeking to deceive the West, to throw it off its guard so as better to grip it by the throat later; others perceived him to be a bold reformer who wished only to lead his country onto the path of civilization, decency, and the rule of law. In fact, it became increasingly clear that he had no precise (or even imprecise) plan, that *perestroika* was an empty word (*glasnost* was not), that he reacted to events generally unprepared, in haste. Still, by repeatedly insisting that fundamental though ill-defined changes were urgently needed, he revealed the empire's lack of self-confidence. Once it is recognized that the rulers of an empire doubt its legitimacy, one may safely assume that the end is in sight. Gorbachev was aware—he is not stupid—that his appeals would set into motion various forces that might go beyond what he intended, but he failed to foresee the social energies he would unintentionally release. He hoped to keep the reforms (whatever this meant) within the limits he himself set—at the outset this, it seems, was his concept of democracy—but he showed himself incapable of containing the mounting waves; like so many

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other reformers in history, he fell prey to his own reformist zeal, destroying what in his mind was to be put straight and perfected.

WHAT DID POLAND DO?

One of the things most derided and mocked by twentieth-century Polish writers and thinkers was the idea of Polish messianism; emerging in poetry and philosophy after the defeat of the 1830 anti-Russian uprising, it depicted Poland as the "Christ of nations," whose suffering and crucifixion would redeem mankind. This seemed a ridiculous, self-comforting, and self-compensating fantasy, but on closer inspection there may have been some truth in it. Poland, the first country to defeat the Red Army shortly after the Revolution, prevented Europe from falling victim to communism, and perhaps confirmed the Hegelian notion that in every historical form the seeds of its future demise can be discerned from the outset. Poland was the only country invaded by the allied armies of Hitler and Stalin; this invasion triggered the Second World War. It was the first country to fight the Third Reich and one of two occupied (with Yugoslavia) that continued armed resistance against the German invaders. After the war, under communist rule, it was the first country to develop a mass movement of criticism, ideologically articulated, which culminated in 1956 in the change of leadership and the first appointment of a Communist Party leader without investure by Moscow, indeed in defiance of the Kremlin. The disillusionment was not slow in coming. It was the first country in which the communist ideology clearly and irreversibly died away. And the first in which a mass civic movement "Solidarnosc" emerged and swept like fire over the land in 1980, nearly destroying the communist state machinery. Poland was the first (and only) country where overt military dictatorship was imposed in 1981 when it became obvious that the Communist Party was falling apart. The democratic opposition movement survived, however, despite mass repressions; it was determined to challenge the regime again. Poland was the only country in which communist authorities felt compelled to call a referendum, lost it, and then, miracle of miracles, said aloud that they had done so. It was the first country which forced the communist rulers to organize partially a free election of which the results were so devastating as to cause the Party to collapse and the first noncommunist government in a

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communist country to be formed. It is fair to add, however, that, as a price of its early success, Poland soon came to be outstripped by other latecomers; it had its own fully free election very much later, in October 1991.

A Messiah? Perhaps. This is not to say that the history of Poland, after or before the war, was an uninterrupted pageant of virtue and bravery; far from it. Still, its pioneering role in the slow decomposition of Sovietism cannot be denied.

NATIONALISM, COMMUNISM, AND THE LEFT

A wave of nationalist passions and hatred is today flooding post-communist Europe: this was predictable, predicted, and anticipated with alarm. The standard and often repeated explanation for this phenomenon is that nationalist ideologies stepped into a "vacuum" left by communism; that they had been "frozen" for decades, thawed by sudden political changes. The reality is less simple. There was no ideological "vacuum" suddenly opened up by the destruction of the old regime; the communist ideology had ceased to exist as a viable idea years earlier. And nationalist passions were not exactly "frozen"; they had been asserting themselves for a long time, parallel to the gradual enfeeblement of the totalitarian machinery. The process had been going on for over thirty years before the glorious year 1989! This memorable year, at least in certain communist countries, was not an explosion blowing up a sound, well-settled building; rather, it was like the breaking up of an egg, from inside the shell, in which an embyro chicken had been maturing for some time. The event, though making the transition to a quite new life possible, was less catastrophic and considerably less noisy than an explosion. Still, the chicken was frail at the beginning.

In doctrinal terms, communism was the anticipation of a world in which all mediating devices between the individual and the species as a whole—including the nation—would be made redundant and would therefore vanish; the cosmopolitan character of capital and the internationalism of the working class were expected to prepare the demise of nation, recognized to be a historical anachronism. The Leninist movement, however, while accepting this philosophy, promoted also the anti-Marxist idea of national self-determination as a purely destructive tactical device that would—and did—contribute to

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the decomposition of the czarist empire and of the entire century-old post-Viennese European order.

Communism in power was intended to eradicate the very reality of nation as a focus of people's separate loyalty (the only all-embracing loyalty was to be to the Soviet state and the Party). However, the Communist Party from the very beginning and almost to the end stirred up and exploited nationalist movements elsewhere to help undermine the hostile "capitalist" powers. This policy, while justified by the Leninist concept of imperialism, soon became indistinguishable from the imperial czarist policy of old. Inside the Soviet state, nationalism as an ideology and an expression of national feelings was in principle forbidden, but Russian nationalism (not Ukrainian or Georgian, of course) stealthily came onto the stage in the 1930s, and was stimulated by every means during the war and in the post-Stalinist era, especially in the 1960s and later. It was, not without its inconsistencies, tolerated or encouraged; anti-yellow racism and anti-Semitism were its natural ingredients. In the "satellite" countries, the ruling party felt compelled, in proportion to the decay of the communist idea, to employ nationalism increasingly as a tool of self-legitimacy. They desperately sought to depict themselves as the best possible embodiment of national tradition; official language was more and more larded with patriotic slogans. In fact, a contradiction between the image of communism as a splendid edifice built from scratch, on a cultural desert, and communism as the continuation of everything good in the national tradition could be detected from almost the beginning.

In Poland, this was perhaps more spectacular than elsewhere. There were limits, of course. Still, beating the drum of national megalomania was usually rewarded; public anti-German and anti-Semitic hatred were sometimes encouraged, sometimes silenced, depending on political needs. The only thing strictly forbidden was mention of the issue of national independence; people were supposed to act as fervent patriots but never to allude to one detail—the sovereignty of their own state.

And so, nationalisms did not suddenly jump out of a freezer; they were simply allowed more room to expand. Tribal or national feelings and loyalties have always been a natural part of human life; "tribe" or "nation" equates with experience; "mankind" does not. Preferential solidarity with one's own cultural, historical, and linguis-

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tic niche is something people need, not something to be forbidden or deplored. Why should we expect or demand that people become perfectly cosmopolite, so that a Frenchman would be indifferent to whether something was happening in Guatemala or in France? To be sure, national feelings carry an ugly potential; they may, in unfavorable circumstances, produce jingoistic, hate-filled bellicosity. This, however, is not always and everywhere inevitable. Passionate love often leads to homicide, but it would be wrong to say that love is homicidal by nature. Patriots and chauvinists may be distinguished from one another; both breeds are found in every European nation. National hostilities generally have to do with territories and minorities. After centuries of European history, populations are mixed all over the continent; there are no clear ethnic borders; many linguistic islands exist. The hatred and mistrust generated by these conditions are not likely to evaporate in the near future. It is a fact that racist and chauvinist movements are dangerously increasing in many parts of Western Europe, quite independently of events in the East; the idea of the nation-state seems to gain in popularity in the very period of European unification.

Will the funeral of communism in Europe bring significant changes to the political maps of Western countries, especially on the left, if that word retains any meaning at all? The answer: probably not. Social democratic parties with good antitotalitarian credentials can proceed with their social agendas—reasonable or unreasonable—and need not worry much about the demise of Leninism, though their left wings may indeed lose strength. As to communist parties of Muscovite rite, the greatest number in Europe managed to change their names and ideology relatively early, or just happily passed away. One may be suspicious about the social democratic butterflies flowing out of ugly communist pupas; but having lost their ideological armor, they cannot be what they once were. The Italian party, having abandoned—rather late—the sickle and hammer, will probably continue to struggle for admission to the "democratic spectrum" from its previous seat among the supporters of tyranny; it may weaken, but it may survive, vying for space with social democrats.

The other communist party of significance, the French, is in a different position. Its incorrigible Stalinism was until recently reasonable and well devised. After all, these people were Communists not because they expected certain specific political conditions to give

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them again two junior posts in a socialist government. What they wanted was total power and nothing less. The only way to secure such power would be for the Red Army to occupy France and appoint local Communists as their reliable satraps. In such a scenario, the strength of the party in numbers would not matter very much; only discipline and obedience would count. There would always be a sufficient number to run concentration camps efficiently and to organize chaotically the distribution of coupons for bread. But the dream of Soviet occupation is over. And, if the communist leader, Marchais, were suddenly to say that he had converted to democracy, was going to reform himself, this would be a really dangerous move because France would die of laughter. Still, the Party may survive ambiguously for some time, vying with the National Front, and feeding itself on anti-European resentments, together with an emphasis on the perennial issue of unemployment.

As to the various leftist sects of Trotskyite or Maoist persuasion, they may survive because their virtue, unlike that of the Stalinist parties, has been to remain completely and happily immune from all reality. Though they claimed to be ideologically independent of Sovietism, they lived under the umbrella of Soviet "socialism"; their pathetic sobbing at the sight of crumbling tyrannies can now be heard. But they will possibly survive (perhaps except for strictly terrorist organizations directly or indirectly supported by the KGB) because, not unlike adventist or millenarian sects, they have voluntarily decided to live permanently in the immutable reality of the past. They may survive for centuries, excommunicating each other as agents of imperialism, scientifically predicting each year that the next year will bring the cataclysmic and irreversible world crisis of capitalism, as a result of which "the masses" will grant them the dictatorial power they deserve, given the correctness of their scientific theory. A friend told me that he once met in America, long ago, the basilissa of Byzantium, who kept her dynastic legitimacy intact. Five centuries cannot abrogate the legitimacy, since the pagans had no right to destroy the empire. So, there is no reason that the legitimate heirs of Lenin and Trotsky should not continue to make their claims for the next half millennium.

This is not to say that the political arrangements of Western Europe and its party systems are going to last indefinitely. Those arrangements may well fall apart in the next decade or so, paving the

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way to new ones, reflecting shifting priorities in public life. It is not the decline of communism that makes such a redistribution of political forces conceivable. The victory of democracy is by no means assured; there are various noncommunist forms of tyranny.

LOOKING FOR THE RADIANT PAST

Predictably, all nations trying to construct something new on the rubble of communism are now searching for their blessed innocence. People want to depict themselves as heroes of the resistance; they wish to appear indignant and pure, on the lookout for real communist culprits. One sometimes has the impression that through the decades of communism the population consisted of a handful of miserable traitors and a mass of noble rebels. The real history was very different. To be sure, there are among the remnants of the old regime, real murderers, people who directly ordered and carried out the most hideous tasks—the secret police thugs, arrogant and bumptious party *apparatchiks,* confident in the eternity of their power; they are deservedly held in contempt; some should be punished. But the simple truth is that in most of those countries—Poland in the late 1970s and 1980s was again the exception—the antitotalitarian opposition movement embraced only a tiny minority. Those people saved the soul of these nations; until recently, most of the others preferred to cross the street at their sight. An enormous majority sought to survive by adapting themselves to the seemingly perennial "system," not because of an enthusiastic commitment to the communist idea but because of the sheer need to carry on life in relative safety. The mass opposition movement started when it was patent to all (except perhaps to certain American Sovietologists) that the tiger was on its deathbed.

There were true believers (fewer and fewer, no doubt) and there were others whose minds were molded and reduced to permanent apathy, passivity, and hopelessness. Totalitarianism was never satisfied with a simple avoidance of opposition; it did everything to make everyone serve as active accomplices. And, to a large extent, it succeeded: the great majority voted in the sham elections to avoid unpleasant consequences, though not very serious ones; they took part in the obligatory marches on the occasion of major political festivities. The police informers were easily recruited, won over by

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miserable privileges, often agreeing to serve as the result of very mild pressure. It was normal to canvass the support of all Party functionaries for every kind of need. There was never a great problem in finding non-Party people to serve in "parliaments," or in various decorative bodies having no power, built to glorify the true power-holders. There were, of course, differences between the countries, between the historical phases of the development (and decline) of the various regimes. Historians will be kept busy for generations seeking to represent the undistorted picture of those years. The established popular image will, as usual, be a figment of the imagination, a certificate of national innocence. We may as well expect in due course something analogous to the German *Historikerstreit*, especially in Russia.

It is not easy to convince oneself that those communist decades were a kind of unnatural hole in the historical process, an empty time, a total break in continuity, a sheer waste; but it is difficult and unpleasant to include communism in the continuous course of the national past because then the nation as a whole must carry the burden of responsibility. There is such a thing as national guilt; otherwise, there would be no reason that people would need to whitewash their own nation from culpability for past crimes in which they personally had no part. Could half of Europe and half of Asia have been raped by a handful of bloodthirsty madmen, by Lenin and Stalin? Such things do not happen; it is nice to believe that they do, and to live with the innocent conscience of the rape victim.

And since communism was awful (as it indeed was), it will be normal to believe that the precommunist past, czarist Russia in particular, was an unceasing festival of hilarity. On both counts, popular historical perception will scarcely deal with reality. There is no point in deploring this. Self-deception is a necessary part of life, both in the individual and in the nation; it provides us all with moral safety.

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Martin Malia

Leninist Endgame

NOTHING ABOUT COMMUNISM EVER ASTONISHED the world so much as the manner of its exit from history. In a feat without precedent, a great state, and one of the world's two superpowers, abolished itself from the face of the earth, repudiating its name, its sacred symbols, and all its basic institutions. And not only did the Soviet state disappear; its formerly 19-million-member Communist Party was dissolved by simple decree, without offering the slightest resistance.

Thus between August and December 1991 a force that had indeed once haunted Europe collapsed like a house of cards. The grand and comforting illusion that was Gorbachev's *perestroika* ended not with the system's renewal, but with its extinction. And this gave us the answer to one of the two great questions of our present *fin de siècle* (which is also appropriately a *fin de millénaire*) : communism cannot be reformed or given a human face; it can only be dismantled and replaced.

Amidst the rubble left over from this crash, we are now awaiting the answer to the second great question of our age: what does the exit from communism lead to? In the euphoria following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and its even briefer sequel after Russia's August Revolution of 1991, the answer to this question seemed clear: next came "the transition to democracy and the market" and the universal triumph of Western values, an outcome sometimes known as the "end of history." Since then, however, it has become apparent that this transition could be as complex and nerve-racking as the Cold War. And we will no doubt have to wait into the next century to find out what exactly lies on the far side of Sovietism.

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Accordingly, the gloomiest surmises now cloud the horizon. A majority of observers anticipate not democracy, but chauvinism, authoritarianism, civil strife, and nuclear proliferation as the likely staples of life-after-communism, with Yugoslavia as the adumbration of the post-Soviet world—a future that has already arrived in Georgia. In its extreme form, this foreboding is pushed to predictions of fascism, seen as arising in "Weimar Russia" out of the conjunction of economic collapse and "Slavophile" xenophobia.

All of this has become personalized in the frowning figure of "Czar Boris" Yeltsin, characterized as a new "autocrat" in contrast with the "democrat" Gorbachev, or even caricatured as a fascistoid bully. Thus nostalgia for *perestroika* was the dominant note of Western eulogies of Gorbachev as the red flag came down over the Kremlin on Christmas Day—while the "president" read his televised farewell address with the same red flag conspicuously planted on his desk. The afterglow of the West's cult of Gorbachev is such that *perestroika* communism is often made to appear as a golden age, and the late Soviet Union as a force for civilization, from which Yeltsin's democrats are a great falling off.

So, which side should we believe in this oscillation of opinion between euphoria and foreboding? Is the eastern half of the continent on its way to integration into a "common European home," thus becoming like the West in its better guises, as the optimists have it? Or is the postcommunist world flipping from one extremism into another, in a recapitulation of Europe at its right-wing worst in the period between the two world wars, as the pessimists would hold?

The truth is that this either/or, optimist-versus-pessimist approach to the exit from communism is simplistic and one-dimensional. It underplays the unique historical experience that the postcommunist countries are now trying to overcome and views their problems through the prism of Western experience. In fact, postcommunism will yield a very mixed result because its basic problems are created by the previous structures of the communist order. Postcommunism will be unique in human history, because communism itself was unique. Just as socialism had been built by the "negation," as Marx might have said, of capitalist structures, so the postcommunist world is now being built by the negation of the Leninist experience. To grasp the nature of the present transition, therefore, we will first look at what it is negating, and then examine, step by step, the conse-

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quences this negation has produced thus far. This procedure will also permit us to answer the ancillary question of whether the gradualism of *perestroika* might have provided a softer transition to a post-totalitarian society than the revolutionary break that in fact occurred.

* * *

And, indeed, the ex–Soviet Union and its former East European satellites are now a much more crisis-racked area than they were under Gorbachev. But the cause of this lies not in the policies of the postcommunist leadership; it inheres rather in those structural defects of the Leninist system which produced the unprecedented implosions of 1989 and 1991.

For the communist system was no ordinary despotism, but the world's premier and most total totalitarianism. This elementary point requires emphasis, because during the past twenty-five years it was largely obscured by mainstream Western Sovietology, which offered a picture of the Soviet Union that, while not exactly rosy, nevertheless presented us with what was basically a success story. It is in large part because of this mistaken representation that the West believed so readily in *perestroika's* chances of renewing the system, and in Gorbachev's political vision and prowess. And it is for having believed in this that we were so astounded when the whole system came crashing to the ground.

Among the misappreciations of mainstream Western Sovietology, two stand out. First, this Sovietology argued that the USSR after Stalin had ceased being totalitarian and had instead become merely "authoritarian," with an ever-increasing degree of "institutional pluralism." This maturing Soviet society was thus capable of organic "transition" to some sort of social democracy. Second, this Sovietology took Soviet prices, which are political rather than economic indicators, and filtered them through a "cost-adjustment factor" to produce data which were fed into sophisticated Western models for calculating the GNP. This produced exaggerated indices of economic success that could be used in two ways: either to demonstrate the existence of a major Soviet threat, or to illustrate the system's potential for evolution into democracy. Thus, our main authority in the matter, the CIA, for years overestimated the Soviet economy as some 60 percent of the American. But this was not because that

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institution was a coven of hawks with a self-interest in exaggerating the adversary's strength; the CIA was simply applying the best scientific techniques and concepts of measurement developed by academic Sovietology, which on the whole leaned to the left.

But the cataclysmic ending of the system revealed that its nature had always been quite different from what this Sovietology supposed. For such a total collapse could only proceed from a total society, in which all activities were commanded from a single, autocratic center. Its purposes were the "building of socialism" and the defense of its "irreversible conquests." Socialism, by definition, was the culmination of the logic of history, the highest degree of social justice, and the ultimate in material well-being and economic efficiency. To the achievement of these purposes, therefore, all aspects of life were justifiably subordinated: the economy, the civil administration, the judicial system, the educational institutions, the culture, and even the private life of individuals.

In institutional terms, this meant a universal "command-administrative" system under the Plan, the Police, and the Party-state. Nonetheless, though the Party was the real power in this system, it did not rule directly. It ruled rather through the formal state (or "soviet") administration, the military hierarchy, the managerial corps of the economy, the schools, and so forth—in short, agencies that are in fact pluralistically ordered in a normal society. And it did this by reserving key appointments in every social agency for the appropriate Party committee, a system designated by the term *nomenklatura.* Finally, the whole command-administrative structure was coordinated by a network of Party cells at every level, and orchestrated by drumbeat agitprop in the state-controlled media.

It is in the logic of such a total system that it should end in total collapse. The structure is so tight, and everything is so interconnected, that any attempt at liberalization inevitably skids off into dissolution. And the intrinsic irreformability of communism is no longer a question of opinion; it is now a matter of historical fact. There is no middle way between the integral preservation of such a system and its collapse.

Yet it was understandably difficult for those who had responsibility for the system, as well for those who had to live under it, to believe that it could not be improved. So their quest for a middle way has

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been as constant, and as fruitless, as was once the search for the Northwest Passage around America.

Communist history, then, has been a series of oscillations between a hard and a soft variant of the basic model. The basic model of the Soviet total society was created in the first years of the regime, under Lenin. The two variants are his War Communism of 1918–1921 and his semimixed, but still essentially statist, New Economic Policy, or NEP, of 1921–1929. Stalin then put the system into its definitive and classic form in the 1930s with a regime of Five-Year Plans that was in fact an institutionalized version of War Communism. And after World War II he imposed this "command-administrative regime" throughout Eastern Europe. Ever since, the leaders of the various communist countries have periodically set sail for the reform of this system, to find the fabled route to "socialism with a human face." And there have been three main bouts of such reform communism.

* * *

The first occurred during Stalin's reign itself, in Yugoslavia, in the form of Marshal Tito's "self-management" in the economy and of federalism in both state and Party organization. Only the Party-army remained as a unitary force on the classic communist model. Self-management, however, quickly turned into local, rather than central, Party control of the economy, leading to the usual socialist stagnation, as well as to increasing dependence on the West—tourism and the export of *Ostarbeiter*—for whatever prosperity the country enjoyed. And federalism worked only so long as the charismatic and despotic Marshal was there to hold his realm together.

After his death in 1980, this federalism, with its collective and rotating presidency, turned increasingly into local and national separatism. And when marketization became necessary in 1989–1990, as occurred everywhere in socialist Europe at the time, separatism escalated into secession in the more advanced republics. Of the old unitary center there remained only the Party-army; and since this army was also largely Serbian, the nationalism of the largest republic was utilized by Slobodan Milosevic to give the regime a new lease on life. This policy is best described by an old term from Germany in the 1920s, "national bolshevism," that is, the use of Leninist structures to build national strength for foreign conquest.

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And this is one exit from communism. Or more exactly, it is half an exit, because the other half of the old structure still remains, though now shorn of its original ideological purpose. Communism, it would seem, is not that easily sloughed off, even in a country where it has been half-dead since Tito broke with Stalin in 1948. Despite its terminal state, it still enfolds its former prey in a tenacious embrace.

* * *

The second great attempt at reform communism was Khrushchev's de-Stalinization of 1956–1961. Perhaps even less than Tito did Khrushchev understand the system he ruled, despite the fact that he had helped to build it. His calculation was that if he removed the myth—and the corpse—of Stalin from the system, the rest would then function smoothly. He believed it would indeed function so well that "the present generation would live under communism" (that is, the final and full stage of socialism), thereby "burying" capitalism by outproducing it.

In fact, however, de-Stalinization began the delegitimation of the system by revealing both its fallibility and its criminal nature. Explosions therefore resulted in both Poland and Hungary. The first of these began the long process leading to Solidarity and liberation. The second ended temporarily in stark repression, which Janos Kadar later had to attenuate by a controlled liberalization. After Khrushchev's fall, in Czechoslovakia in 1968 a belated de-Stalinization produced another explosion and another, more enduring, repression. And in Russia itself, Khrushchev's cultural thaw, though it too ended in a refreeze, inaugurated a continuing literature of dissidence that would slowly erode communism's legitimacy in the country of its creation. In all these cases, and whatever the outcome, the system emerged weakened from the crisis that reform had generated.

To counter this crisis, Khrushchev's successors after 1964 moved to authoritarian retrenchment at home and the Brezhnev doctrine of intervention to preserve socialism in Eastern Europe. But this period of "stagnation," as it is now called, only bought a little more time. The basic Stalinist structures remained intact; the economy started to decline steadily, and the old ideological myths by which the system lived began to wear perilously thin. Although outwardly the regime

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still had the nuclear and conventional military trappings of a superpower—indeed more of them than ever before—inwardly there was only decay, and the leadership knew it. As Gorbachev confided to Shevardnadze in 1984, "It is impossible to live this way any longer."

* * *

Thus, in 1985, the Soviet regime embarked on the third great bout of reform communism. Gorbachev had no grand design for this "*perestroika*," but he did have a set of general goals: to make the system more productive, more modern technologically, more flexible, and more respectable in the eyes of the world. But to achieve these aims he did a number of things that, in fact, went against the logic of the system.

First, in 1985–1986, he took the initiative in ending the Cold War, because he realized the Soviet Union no longer had the resources to keep up the competition. In this regard, the Strategic Defense Initiative, or "Star Wars," of Ronald Reagan was probably a major factor, as Soviet government officials and social scientists later often asserted. But ending the Cold War, as well as admitting the truth about Western superiority, deprived the system of the external, "imperialist" enemy it had always needed. At the same time it pointed up the fact of Soviet failure.

Second, in 1987, Gorbachev initiated *glasnost*, which, even though intended only as a limited right of criticism to limber the system up, was rapidly expanded by a disaffected intelligentsia to the point where it delegitimized official Soviet history—and with it the Party, its great totem Lenin, and the socialist purpose of the system. This abdication of ideology was perhaps the most crucial miscalculation of *perestroika*, for without the justification of ideology all the rest was bound to unravel in short order. Nor was the resort to police terror as a substitute for "scientific communism" any longer possible if *perestroika* was to keep its now-indispensable international reputation.

Third, Gorbachev concluded by 1988 that the existing Party was ill-adapted to his goal of modernization. He therefore started to dismantle its structures and at the same time to create a parallel power base for reform communism by reviving the soviet, or state, apparatus through partially contested elections in 1989 and 1990, a

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program known as "democratization." But democratization also overshot the intended mark and redoubled the delegitimizing effect of *glasnost*, while at the same time permitting a genuine democratic and anticommunist opposition to organize.

Finally, in 1988, in an effort to revitalize the economy by decentralizing it, he gave limited autonomy to state enterprises, and permitted the emergence of a semiprivate, "cooperative" sector. But these measures simply destroyed the vertical command system of the old Plan without creating new horizontal structures of exchange. For such structures presuppose the market, and the market presupposes real prices, both of which presuppose private property; and all of this was unthinkable because it was unsocialist.

Thus, overall, and without his intending to do so, Gorbachev undermined most of the pillars of the system: its Purpose, its Plan, its Police, and its Party. Yet at the same time all these things were left formally and officially in place, a situation which obviously could not endure for long without a decision either for dissolution of the system or repression in its defense. There was only one thing Gorbachev did not "restructure," and that was the multinational "Union" and its unitary armed forces. In this domain he only maneuvered endlessly to produce a new Union treaty, because he could not bring himself to diminish significantly the power of the "center," and of that "great state" of which he had had himself elected "president." Yet there was little chance that this "center" would hold when all the other components of the system were giving way.

* * *

The crash of the system came, however, not from the erosion that *perestroika* caused within the Soviet Union, but from its impact on an even more fragile Eastern Europe. Early on, Gorbachev pressured the "little brothers" to undertake their own restructuring, citing Jaruzelski and Kadar as his most likely imitators. Soviet conservatives answered by condemning the disorder in Poland and Hungary, and holding up East Germany and Czechoslovakia as models of stability and economic success for the Soviet Union itself. Gorbachev, therefore, had to push these two Brezhnevite holdouts into reform to defend his own *perestroika* at home. The result was his famous October 1989 visit to Berlin and his kiss of death to Honecker, with

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the admonition that "life punishes those who tarry" in adapting to change. Yet the removal of Honecker did not produce an East German *perestroika*, but the fall of the Berlin Wall; and this ignited the chain reaction that by December destroyed communism throughout the Soviet "external empire." The system in Eastern Europe had been so undermined by earlier explosions—from Tito, to the Prague Spring, to Solidarity—that it no longer possessed any constituency for the halfway house of reform communism, but only peoples who wanted out of the system altogether.

And this was a second exit from communism, so far the most benign, at least in the northern tier of East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. East Germany obviously is a case apart, because an already existing state, the affluent West German Federal Republic, was there to pick up the pieces—and the bill. In each of the other cases one or another factor was present to cushion the fall. In Poland and Hungary the political and economic monopoly of the Party had been so attenuated over time that the collapse looked almost like a transition. In Czechoslovakia (as in East Germany) the end was brusque and revolutionary, but a long historical experience of industrial civilization, a reasonably satisfactory contemporary standard of living, and proximity to German investment eased the launching of reform. In all three of these cases, finally, the old state structures were perceived as national and legitimate, and hence were preserved as part of the new order. This is in marked contrast to Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, where the pseudo-federal state was repudiated and destroyed. In the southern tier of the peoples democracies, however, the situation was more like that of their immediate neighbor, Yugoslavia, though without a war. In Romania the communist *nomenklatura* is still as firmly in power as in Serbia; and Bulgaria has only begun to move in the direction of the northern tier of the former peoples' democracies. Yet all of these countries, even the most favored, shared the same structural problems of postcommunism which have appeared in their starkest form in the homeland of the system, the former Soviet Union.

And the Soviets' terminal crisis was the immediate consequence of the East European collapse. The end of East European communism in fact meant the demise of the system everywhere, for rolling back "real socialism " in so huge an area refuted all its dogmas. It meant that socialism was not the outcome of the logic of history; that it was a

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practical failure; and that one did not have to compromise with it since it could actually be overthrown. So why not undo it in the Soviet Union also? It is this realization that underlay the movement, first for sovereignty, and then for independence, that rolled through the Soviet republics in 1990. And this movement, especially after it had been taken up by Russia, meant the end of that great overarching component of the system, the "center," the Union, or what the opposition now called the "empire."

* * *

The problem is that this Union was not a real federation, but a unitary state, resting on force. But this does not mean that it was an empire, either, at least not in any usual sense of that word. It was not like the late British or French empires, composed of a "mother country" or "metropole" and its colonies. It was not like the old Roman or Turkish empires, where a privileged core nation ruled over inferior conquered provinces. Rather, the Union was a monolithic Party-state, and its "republics" were simply administrative subdivisions created to give a fictitious recognition to minority nationalisms, while reserving all real power for the "center" in Moscow. But this Muscovite "center," or metropole, which indeed governed all the rest for its benefit, was not the Russian nation; it was the Party and its *nomenklatura*. To be sure, the Party used Russian as a lingua franca to cement the system; and it employed mostly Russian personnel in key administrative posts, because the nationalism of the minority peoples was automatically anti-Soviet, whereas a certain statist Russian nationalism could be co-opted by associating it with the Soviet Union's superpower rank. Yet what counted in the system was not national culture or allegiance; it was communist fidelity and rank in the *nomenklatura*. Practically, this meant that when the "mono-organizational" ensemble of the Party began to crumble, the imperial Union could only crumble with it—still another characteristic of the system that Gorbachev seems not to have understood.

This attack on the Union came in a vast movement from below in 1990–1991, first for sovereignty but soon for independence, on the part of the fifteen Soviet republics. In the wake of this came similar separatist movements within the various republics, from the Ossetians of Georgia, to the Chechen-Ingushs and Tatars of Russia, and

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on to the Gagauz of what is now Moldova. All these movements are usually attributed to the forces of nationalism, renascent after long repression by the Muscovite "center," masking its traditional imperialism and Great Russian chauvinism in a spurious proletarian internationalism. And, indeed, nationalism is a major component of this movement, especially in the Baltic states, in western and central Ukraine, in Georgia and Armenia, as well as in some of the ethnic "autonomies" within Russia. But as the selective character of this list indicates, not all of the "republics" are moved by nationalism, because not of all of them are real nations. Such entities as Byelorussia (or Bielorus as it is now called) and Uzbekistan are wholly Soviet administrative creations. Kazakhstan is a completely artificial Stalinist amalgamation of recently nomadic Kazakhs and Russian-cum-Ukrainian settlers. Even Ukraine is genuinely national only in old Galicia and in the central regions around Kiev. Kharkov and the Donbass in the East, the Black Sea coast of Odessa and New Russia, as well as the Crimea, Khrushchev's "gift" to Ukraine in 1954, are basically Russian; southern Bessarabia and sub-Carpathian Ruthenia and northern Bukovina, all added to Ukraine by Stalin, had never been part of any Ukrainian unit before; indeed, no organized, independent Ukrainian unit had ever existed at all.

It would be no exaggeration to say that a good half of the ex-Soviet republics are states only in the same sense that the artificially carved-out European colonies in Africa are states: they are not genuine nations, yet to tamper with their borders would be too dangerous for anyone to contemplate. Still, some of these ex-Soviet republics may eventually become real nation-states. For nations are made, not born. France was created by the Capetian monarchy; it did not emerge as the expression of some hypothetical national or popular soul. More recently, French colonial authority, by its centralized administration of the middle portion of North Africa, created a genuine Algerian nation where none had existed before. This is a not unlikely future for Ukraine, and even Bielorus, now that they are endowed with separate and distinct administrations. It is far less likely, however, for the Soviet subdivisions of Central Asian "Turkestan." And it will probably not proceed very far at all in most of the "autonomies" within the Russian Federation, in which the 84 percent of the population that is Russian will most probably maintain its

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preponderance: it is difficult to imagine the European Community recognizing Tatarstan or Bashkiria.

In any event, the particular piece of Soviet wreckage that was the Union will take some time to shake down into a new and more stable shape. The Commonwealth of Independent States improvised by Yeltsin at Brest and Minsk in December is no doubt only a draft. And in the meantime, over half its members—the Central Asian republics, Bielorus, and even Ukraine—have, unlike Russia, yet to complete their anticommunist revolutions. As in Serbia and Romania, the Party *apparat* is still in power under such old-line leaders as Ukraine's Leonid Kravchuk, Bielorus's Stanislav Shushkevich, and Kazakhstan's Nursultan Nazarbayev, all only opportunistically converted to democracy.

* * *

What the immaturity of nationalism in most of the ex–Soviet Union reveals is this: the movement for republic sovereignty is in large measure a movement for local control over the economy, public administration, and culture—in short, over all aspects of life hitherto subject to the "mono-organizational" control of the Party-state. The "center" in ex-Soviet parlance does not mean Moscow, the capital of Russia, but Moscow, the seat of the Party. And the revolt against the center, in the first instance, is an effort to dismantle the all-intrusive Party apparatus and its *nomenklatura* by local initiative from below. When the crack-up of the system came, therefore, beginning with the local elections of March 1990, the empty vessel of republic sovereignty was filled with real substance by virtue of the struggle against Party control. Thus the elephantine white office building constructed by Brezhnev for the Russian Republic became a genuine center of power as Yeltsin's "White House."

This effort at self-emancipation by "civil society" is perhaps the core meaning of the term *democracy* as it is now used in the ex–Soviet Union. A prime example is in the title the "Democratic Russia Movement," the electoral coalition of parties that put Boris Yeltsin, Gavriil Popov, Anatoli Sobchak, Yuri Afanasiev, and the other familiar names of Russian liberation in power. The attitude of the majority of this movement is typical of the relationship between nationalism and the drive for local control in the decomposition of the Soviet system. Most of the Russian democrats are at the same

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time virulently anticommunist and patriotically Russian, since they consider that communism has devastated Russia with its "command-administrative" socialist economics, its earlier utopian internationalism, and its later megalomaniac quest for superpower status. The task, therefore, now is to effect the rebirth of the nation through the destruction of the communist "yoke." These national democratic themes are exactly those of Yeltsin and his partisans in the June elections of 1991, and of their victory rhetoric of August.

After August they pushed these positions to their logical conclusion. Since the pseudo-federation of the Union was simply the supreme form of the Party-state, it too had to be smashed along with all the other agencies of the system. This is why, in December 1991, once Ukraine had voted for independence, the world was offered the unprecedented spectacle of Russia taking the initiative in destroying a Union that most foreigners considered to be the vehicle of her imperial domination. To be sure, there is also a Soviet Russian nationalism, particularly in the army but also among the democrats, which opposed this outcome. Yet the momentum of disintegration was against this current of opinion; so the Soviet house of cards gave way completely. And this total collapse was a third exit from communism, more drastic than either of the two East European variants.

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Thus the Soviets' total system ended in total collapse, which meant that at the exit from communism society was confronted with a total problem. Nothing could be salvaged from the old order; everything had to be replaced and rebuilt: the economy, the polity, the society itself. The problem of rebuilding will be all the more staggering in that, as East European and Soviet democrats have so often observed, there are no precedents for such a situation. Nonetheless, the postcommunist countries began to elaborate a program "dialectically," so to speak, by negating all their previously existing structures. Socialism, as Marx argued, had always been in essence noncapitalism, that is, the abolition of private property, of its fruit—profit—and of the means for realizing that profit—the market. It was to implement this program that the Party existed, and that it had arrogated to itself dictatorial power over society. In all the postcommunist countries the democrats' aim is to undo this program and to reverse the

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process of its implementation. Just as socialism began as noncapitalism, the present program of the Eastern democrats is, in essence, nonsocialism. Concretely this means, and in the following order, disestablishing the Party, re-creating the market, and resurrecting private property. And where the Party has also created a pseudo-federation, as in Yugoslavia or the Soviet Union, this means dismantling and rebuilding the state as well.

This program, whether carried out through "shock therapy" and by a "big bang," as in Poland in 1990 and in the ex–Soviet Union in 1991, or by stages, as in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, is basically the same in all postcommunist countries. Thus, though the East Europeans keep repeating that there is no recipe for mastering their unprecedented situation, they are in fact coming up with such a recipe under the pressure of harsh necessity. And this recipe exhibits a number of regularities common to all the postsocialist countries.

* * *

A first regularity concerns the relationship between political and economic change in the decomposition of the system. Before communism's fall most critics of the system considered that economic change, initiated or at least allowed by the regime, would have to precede political liberalization and democratization. This indeed had seemed to be the meaning of the Hungarian way under Kadar, as well as that of Gierek and, during the later years, of Jaruzelski in Poland. But it turned out that the political transformation in fact occurred first, through the collapse of the system, and that this was the indispensable preliminary to real economic change, in the form of transition to the market. In retrospect, this is no more than logical in a system where everything was political except politics: only once the political hold of the Party had been broken could anything else be fundamentally altered.

The second regularity is that once the Party had been disestablished, the relationship of political to economic change was reversed. In the postcommunist situation it is the process of economic reform that governs the prospects for democracy. None of the former communist countries (except, for obvious reasons, East Germany) as yet has a real constitution. Each is ruled by a parliament created under the old regime, but which has now acquired constituent functions and, usually, a new majority; and a popularly elected

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presidency has normally been added to this core. In the Russian case, the parliament was chosen under an old, semirigged Gorbachevian suffrage and has a communist plurality, while Boris Yeltsin was elected by universal suffrage. In the Ukrainian parliament the ex-Communists still have an absolute majority, and a popularly elected president, Karzchuk, who until the August coup was a Party member. In Poland the first election of parliament by universal suffrage last October produced a fragmented body, where the Communists are almost as strong as Solidarity, and which confronts the popularly elected President Walesa. And in both Poland and Hungary participation in parliamentary elections is now down to 40 percent. Clearly, such improvised governments are fragile, in both their social base and their potential for conflict between the legislature and the executive. Nowhere in Eastern Europe, moreover, have there as yet emerged political parties with clear constituencies. In such a situation reasonably rapid progress toward economic improvement is imperative for the consolidation of constitutional government.

A third regularity is that economic progress, after a quick start, soon begins to lag. This is so because in a situation of total collapse, total reconstruction is necessary. And since all the elements of the new market society, from prices to contract law, are functionally interrelated, in logic everything in the reform package needs to be done first. In fact, however, the first steps everywhere turn out to be price liberalization, the end of subsidies, currency reform, and, if the country is lucky, control of inflation. But these are matters where governmental initiative is primary. This is not so, however, with the next moves in economic reform: the privatization of existing but archaic enterprises, and the creation of a new sector of modern, private production. For these changes require initiative on the part of society; and the rudimentary civil society that emerged from the collapse of communism is too weak for such a response. Economic reform, therefore, bogs down with privatization, and the new society is left with a small class of conspicuous nouveaux riches, significant unemployment, and only a lagging increase in GNP—clearly a dangerous combination in a democratic age.

The creation of a mature, diversified civil society in the East still lies many years in the future. What until now has been called "civil society" has in fact been a moral civil society of dissidents, democrats, and ecclesiastics; it was not a material civil society, because there was

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almost no private property. Indeed, the destruction of society was perhaps the greatest crime that the total Party-state committed against the populations it ruled. And the effect of this destruction will last long beyond the formal structures of the regime that perpetrated it.

A fourth regularity is the obverse of this absence of a genuine civil society: under communism society had been replaced by the omnicompetent Party, and this Party, in dying, passed on its multitudinous membership to the new order. Whether communism had lasted seventy-four years, as in Russia, or only forty-five, as in Eastern Europe, most of the cadres of the democratic successor societies were comprised of Party members. And in the ex–Soviet Union most of the democratic opposition to communism had been in the Party as late as 1990: from President Yeltsin on down through the Russian cabinet and parliament to the provincial soviets, almost all the governing personnel of Russian democracy are recent Communists. Moreover, society has been indoctrinated by the "scientific" view of Marxism-Leninism, and molded by the socialist ethos. It is only below the age of thirty-five that people have not been seriously impaired by this experience. Yet it is with this human material that a new democratic order must be built.

The problem this heritage poses is all the more acute in that communism is now frequently regarded in the East as a "criminal enterprise" deserving, at least as a system, of a "Nuremberg Trial." But meting out justice would be no simple matter, because of the differing degrees of complicity of the former servants of the system. And the staggering number of these accomplices precludes decommunization on anything like the scale of denazification in post–World War II Germany. At the same time, it would be both immoral and impolitic if no personal guilt were assigned, if no one were punished, and if the new societies pretended that no crime had occurred. In Russia this issue will no doubt come to its most spectacular head in mid-1992, when the leaders of last August's "coup"—who were in fact none other than the Soviet government—are brought to trial. This will almost surely become a trial of the old regime itself. However the conundrum of communist guilt is eventually resolved, the shadow of the Leninist past will, once again, lie heavily over the new society for years.

The various factors just discussed yield a fifth regularity: the inevitability of demagogic exploitation of the people's lassitude and anxiety after years of communist decay and the disappointments of

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liberation. This demagogic danger is usually held to lie on the right, in an extreme nationalism leading to fascism; and the examples of presidential candidates Stanislaw Tyminski in Poland and Vladimir Zhirinovsky in Russia are often cited as the precursors of such a movement. It should be pointed out, however, that distressing as both these individuals are, each was a little mad, neither one had an organization, and neither had a solid constituency. And nowhere in the East has anything like a far-right movement emerged: minuscule Pamiat, certainly, is not that.

A much more likely demagogic threat to democracy in fact lies on the left; for though the communist apparatus has been destroyed, and in Russia the Party itself banned, the communist *apparatchiki* are still there. Moreover, they know how to organize, readily accept discipline, and have real solidarity as accomplices in the actions of the late regime. Some are still convinced Marxist-Leninists. Many more, however, are simply nostalgic for the power and glory that was once the Party *apparat* and its Union.

This easily mobilized force could be used in two ways. It could be placed in the service of nationalism, as has already occurred in Serbia, a possible outcome now referred to in Russia as "white communism." Or this force could reemerge, more plausibly, as an ultrapink social democracy. For this it already has an internationally prestigious one-time and perhaps future leader, Gorbachev. And it has a ready-made, classic issue for the left: economic security and social justice. With these issues, in last October's Polish elections, neocommunists, now called socialists, garnered some 12 percent of the vote; Yeltsin's disaffected vice-president, General Alexander Rutskoi of "Communists for Democracy," took a populist antiliberal line in Russia when prices were freed; and the communist-backed candidate against President Jeliu Jelev of Bulgaria in January 1992 received 43 percent of the vote.

* * *

We can only expect that the further communism recedes into the past, and the longer the economic problems of postcommunism endure, the greater will be the appeal of the themes of social justice and economic security, even when exploited by the cynical heirs of the *nomenklatura*. Yet the statist policies these politicians advocate

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would be the worst impediments to the economic revival, and the surest means of keeping civil society in debilitating immaturity. It is unlikely that these para-Leninist forces could come to power; but they might well exert enough pressure on whoever is in power to make the latter adopt a good part of their policies.

Among the means for exerting this pressure would be to play on the theme of the fascist menace, an approach which would also earn neocommunism respectability in the West. Antifascism has perhaps been communism's most successful technique for legitimizing itself as far back as the 1930s; indeed, nothing has ever made communism's fortune more surely than fascism. There is no reason to believe that the antifascist liberal reflexes of decades have suddenly ceased to exist, especially in the West, which has never known communist rule, but which has known fascism. Indeed, we have already seen something of this in the Western public's upside-down contrast, as *perestroika* and the Union were dying, between the self-appointed communist "president," Gorbachev, and the genuinely elected national president, Yeltsin, a contrast that most Western heads of state seem partially to accept.

Neither should we forget that the recent anticommunist revolution created numerous losers in both East and West, and that these losers now have something of a stake in the failure of the victorious democrats. These circumstances, in conjunction with the inevitable continuing difficulties of postcommunism, will no doubt generate the myth of *perestroika* as a prematurely abandoned "middle way" for our age. Just as the myth of a social democratic Nikolai Bukharin and the NEP once served as an ideal alternative to Stalinism and to Brezhnev's "real socialism," so Gorbachev could become the Bukharin-of-today amidst the tribulations of Russian democracy. Indeed, the legend is already emerging that if only the final version of Gorbachev's Union treaty had not been sabotaged by the untoward August coup, *perestroika* would have evolved into a social democratic order far better than the "unbridled capitalism" of Yeltsin and his "nationalistic pseudo-democrats." And on the basis of this myth of a good-communism-that-might-have-been, quite a few comebacks can be engineered, in the West no less than in the East, and in Sovietology as much as in real Soviet politics.

A democratic polity, in a well-known paradox, gives such antidemocratic forces the widest scope for a comeback. The great

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question now, therefore, is whether the new democratic governments in the East will be able to manage a perilous economic transformation effectively enough to avert this danger. For the principal threat to a positive exit from communism is not aggressive nationalism or saber-rattling fascism; the postcommunist world is too devastated for such exertions. The principal threat is a relapse into statist stagnation with a welfare face.

And this would be like a pale ghost of the Party-state returned. Although that institution's stranglehold over the East is now broken forever, the effects of its three-quarter-century domination were hardly ended with the collapses of 1989 and 1991. Communism's poisoned tunic of Nessus still clings, though now limply, over the emaciated bodies of the nations it enfolded for so long.

* * *

Undoing this situation will no doubt prolong the exit from communism into the next century, or until those now under thirty-five have assumed the full leadership of society. But time is obviously on their side, as are the forces of economic development. For, no matter how painful and halting the transition to the market, this transition is ultimately unavoidable, even under an authoritarian or a populist welfare regime. And as this process of economic modernization proceeds, the two halves of the continent will slowly tend toward a common destiny.

The "return to Europe" and to a "normal" society has been the great aim of the democrats in the exit from communism, in both Eastern Europe and in the Slavic republics of the ex–Soviet Union. Perhaps the most vivid symbol of this aspiration is Leningrad's recovery of its old name of "St. Petersburg," that "window onto Europe" built on a marsh, as if in defiance of a hostile environment, by the first Russian "Westernizer," Peter the Great. Yet this change of name has hardly obliterated the heavy heritage of seven decades: around the majestic European core created by the founder stretch the vast Soviet accretions of the cinder-block city of Lenin. The labor of a very long generation will be required before Leningrad truly becomes St. Petersburg again.

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Anders Åslund

Russia's Road from Communism

THIS IS AN EXTRAORDINARY MOMENT IN HUMAN HISTORY. Never before have the majority of countries in the world been democracies. Communism, with its terrors, has died even in its native land. At the same time, the window of opportunity may be brief. Time and again, Russia's president Boris Yeltsin repeats: "This is Russia's last chance." I think he is right in two senses. This is a real chance, and if not taken, the costs of a failure may be horrendous. In such a situation it is vital that the West realize what is going on, that its leaders make a fast and appropriate choice, and that they act with all possible force. So far, neither of these elements is in place. A fundamental rethinking is necessary. The current gloom in the West over the former Soviet Union is as excessive as was the prior joy over Gorbachev.

WAS GORBACHEV'S DEMISE A TRAGEDY?

An unfortunate consequence of the combination of Kremlinology and the personification of the Western media has been an excessive preoccupation with leading political personalities, eventually making everyone in the West, from the man in the street to the president, decide which Soviet leaders are nice or nasty. In the current situation of great flux the leading personalities are important, but what should be assessed is not their social graces but their stand on principal issues and their talent as leaders.

Because of the extraordinary amount of information made available on Soviet politics in recent years, it is not particularly difficult to

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assess the achievements and failures of Mikhail Gorbachev. Three great achievements and failures stand out. What dominates the outside perception, and with good reason, is Gorbachev's dissolution of the outer empire, most of which occurred in the fall of 1989, and with it the end of Soviet aggression in foreign policy. Gorbachev's new thinking in foreign policy was genuine. A second great achievement has been *glasnost*, or the establishment of freedom of speech, a process essentially completed with the first session of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies in May-June 1989. An unintended consequence was the annihilation of communist and socialist ideology. Third, Gorbachev initiated democratization, undermining the power of the Communist Party. A little noted fact is that Gorbachev urged "the democratization of our social and economic life" as early as December 10, 1984, in his major programmatic speech three months before he became secretary general of the CPSU.[1] Thus, it was not a new thought when he brought it up again in January 1987, this time as a major policy plank.

While foreigners tend to be overly impressed by Gorbachev's achievements, Soviet citizens have been ever more struck by his failures. His most stunning shortcoming is his nearly complete neglect of nationality problems. It is difficult to make more naive statements than Gorbachev did in his book *Perestroika:*

> The Revolution and socialism have done away with national oppression and inequality, and ensured economic, intellectual and cultural progress for all nations and nationalities. . . . If the nationality question had not been solved in principle, the Soviet Union would never have had the social, cultural, economic and defense potential as it has now.[2]

Given his complete lack of understanding, Gorbachev was simply dumbfounded when one nationality after another demanded attention. Initially, he treated them as demands for decentralization, and was prepared to make concessions. Then, he tried to exploit the Baltic nationalities as reformist forces. As the various nationalists reasserted themselves, Gorbachev tried to hold them back as long as possible, avoiding the resolution of these issues, sometimes through negotiations, sometimes through the use of force, as in Azerbaijan in January 1990 or in Lithuania in January 1991. His delaying tactics caused a severe aggravation of all the nationality issues. Just before

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his resignation he insisted: "The process now under way is getting us back on the track of creating a new union."[3]

Gorbachev's second major failure was economic reform. Keenly aware of the need for economic reform, he never realized that no middle way existed. As a result, his economic policies tended to fall between two stools, leading to a completely inconsistent economic system, utterly out of balance. The Soviet economic system became far worse than it would have been under an ordinary command economy, or a bold step forward to a complete market economy. Initially, Gorbachev was impeded by communist conservatives, but from 1990 on he showed that he was unprepared to go very far himself.[4] Thus, for example, he insisted: "I, for instance, do not accept private ownership of land whatever you do with me."[5] At the very end, he insisted on slow change, that this was what he had always intended: "But I want a stage-by-stage, step-by-step process that will not stimulate disintegration and chaos."[6] He failed to grasp that disintegration and chaos had already been reached, and that speedy action was the requirement of the day.

Gorbachev's third principal failure is of another nature, showing not so much a lack of understanding as a lack of will. Initially, it was difficult to assess how serious Gorbachev was in his endeavor to democratize the Soviet Union, since his power remained limited. However, it is all too clear that in the winter of 1989–1990 he decided not to strive for full democratization. He sealed his fate in March 1990, if not before, when he allowed himself to be elected president of the USSR by a limited majority of the undemocratically elected USSR Congress of People's Deputies. Soon afterwards, he appointed a Presidential Council that was no more reformist than the Politburo it seemed to replace. From having been a radical, he transformed himself into a centrist. His first public attack on radicals came on November 2, 1987, in connection with his split with Boris Yeltsin. In the winter of 1990–1991, Gorbachev openly sided with the reactionary Communists, and he appointed all the later coup makers, several of whom were his close and trusted collaborators, including his chief of staff, Valeri Boldin. Thus, Gorbachev's ultimate failure derived from the fact that he never became a democrat.

On balance, Hans Magnus Enzensberger appears to have best captured the character of Gorbachev in his essay on "the heroes of deconstruction."[7] If Gorbachev had not believed that it was possible

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to reform communism, he would neither have attempted reform from within the Communist Party nor would he have succeeded in reaching the top of the Party, in implementing his policies. Gorbachev was a typical transitional figure, and should be appraised as such. His rise was as necessary for the start of reform as his demise was for its continuation. Unfortunately, when his departure occurred, it was long overdue. To my mind, Gorbachev's usefulness ended in March 1990. At that time, democratic parliamentary elections were taking place in the three Slavic republics and Gorbachev turned definitively against full democratization, rendering himself the major stumbling block to further reform. This was clear at the time, and is only too obvious in hindsight.[8] Gorbachev appears a tragic figure of Shakespearian dimensions, but his tragedy is that he remained an antidemocratic reform Communist who called himself a Leninist and a Communist even after the coup in August 1991. Gorbachev had made his way to the top and introduced his policies through compromise. When he seemed to have won over the conservative Communists in March 1990, he apparently felt a need to reinvent them, so that he might continue his balancing game. Yeltsin has adroitly characterized Gorbachev:

> He wanted to combine things that cannot be combined—to marry a hedgehog and a grass snake—communism and a market economy, public-property ownership and private-property ownership, the multiparty system and the Communist Party with its monopoly on power. But these things are incompatible. He wanted to retain some of the old things while introducing new reforms. In his latest mistake he wanted our country to be a single state. That is impossible, that is unrealistic. But he decided to stick to his illusions and bide his time.[9]

In the winter of 1990–1991, after Gorbachev turned to the conservative Communists for support, he became ever more isolated, turning his back on nearly all his old advisors. As a result, his decisions became capricious and ill founded. In the end, he departed as a pathetic remnant of a frightful world of the past.

THE RISE OF YELTSIN

The Western love for Gorbachev has been reflected in a corresponding suspicion of Boris Yeltsin. A typical statement of a nonexpert is:

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"My hunch is that Yeltsin is more dictatorial than Gorbachev, more in the traditional mould of the Russian autocrat."[10] Let us look at Yeltsin's recent record to evaluate this common assumption. The contrast with Gorbachev is stark, and on all accounts it is in Yeltsin's favor. Yeltsin publicly opposed both Gorbachev and Yegor Ligachev as early as the fall of 1987, when Gorbachev began to hesitate in his reform endeavors. Yeltsin left the CPSU at its Twenty-eighth Party Congress in July 1990; Gorbachev remained faithful until the liquidation of the Party in August 1991. Unlike Gorbachev, Yeltsin was democratically elected with an overwhelming majority three times, in March 1989 to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, in March 1990 to the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies, and on June 12, 1991 to the presidency of the RSFSR. Moreover, he has maintained proper democratic procedures, in the face of severe disorder in the Soviet legislative process. Frequent domestic complaints that Yeltsin is dictatorial tend to come either from old Communists like Gorbachev, who are not democratic themselves and do not know what democracy is, or people who have not learned the distinction between legislative and executive powers. The impressions of Yeltsin are too often superficial. While his personal style is very Russian, explaining his popularity in Russia, we can hardly blame him for that.[11] It is curious that so many responsible Westerners suggest that Yeltsin is dictatorial without having the evidence to prove that assertion, but it is scarcely surprising, given the previous record of sloppy analysis of Soviet affairs.

On economic reform, in the summer of 1990, Yeltsin adopted the most radical reform program of marketization and privatization, the 500-day program of Grigori Yavlinski, and supported it fully. Gorbachev, in contrast, tried to co-opt the economic reform group principally to take command of the reform process, to water down the program. He eventually discarded it with the words: "We have refuted a program that was like a timetable for passenger trains. . . ."[12] The Russian parliament adopted the 500-day program in September 1990, though it was unable to implement it, since that would have required action by the central government. Since the Union government was continually more conservative than Russia or any of the other more reformist republics, the conservatism of Gorbachev's central government led to increasing tensions between the center and the republics.

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Similarly, while Gorbachev insisted that the Union go on, Yeltsin acknowledged the national aspirations of the various Union republics. Under his leadership, Russia recognized the sovereignty of various republics more rapidly than would ever have been likely under the Union government of Gorbachev.

It is easy to establish the fact that Yeltsin opposed Gorbachev on the three crucial issues on which the Soviet president failed so miserably. Yeltsin abandoned communism and opted for a liberal democracy in the Western sense of the word. Since the summer of 1990, he has taken a clear stand for a liberal market economy with a predominantly private sector. While not pushing for the dissolution of the Union, he has faced the real state of affairs, and accepted the peaceful secession of Union republics. While the status of the autonomous republics remains an open issue, and the question of border changes was raised by his press spokesman in August 1991, Yeltsin's record to date appears convincing.

Yeltsin's style of leadership is in stark contrast to that of Gorbachev. Yeltsin is a born leader, a man of action who is at his best when he leads from the front. While Gorbachev was compromising, Yeltsin was demanding clear decisions; while Gorbachev opted for a gradual approach, Yeltsin urged decisive action. In the current acute crisis, clear decisions and determination are needed. Gorbachev's time ended with the democratization in the republics in the spring of 1990; the cost of his remaining in office so long has been high in terms of both human suffering and economic decline.

YELTSIN'S STRATEGY

It is in this perspective that we must interpret Boris Yeltsin's strategy during the last year. Few matters of such importance have been so poorly understood in the West, which has been preoccupied with the fading star of Gorbachev, although Yeltsin's course represented a current reality. A fundamental lesson from Eastern Europe is that no true transition to a liberal market economy can start before democratization, implying both free democratic elections and the demise of the communist reign. A communist party is simply not credible as a proponent of private ownership and free markets. Formed to abolish both, communist parties represent the vested interests of the old *nomenklatura,* who have in fact usurped "public" property to their

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own advantage. The first large step toward liberal transition in Russia was the democratic election of a Russian president on June 12, 1991, which Yeltsin won with 57 percent of the vote. He had proposed the holding of such elections against very considerable communist resistance two months earlier.

A second step, difficult to interpret from the outside was Yeltsin's increasing control over parts of the military and security apparatus. He spent much time in 1990 and 1991 attending meetings with the military. When the coup developed, a good number of senior officers in both the military and the KGB sided with Yeltsin. The military power had been a major concern of the democrats from the beginning, and may have been a cause of delay in their other reform activities. After gaining the legitimacy provided by popular election, Yeltsin, as the president of Russia, issued a decree in July 1991 prohibiting party organizations at all enterprises and in the state administration, a fundamental blow to the Communist Party as a privileged organization interfering in and drawing on the resources of the state.

The abortive coup, August 19–21, was the final blow to the old communist establishment. In particular, it finished off or discredited nearly all Union bodies. The heads of the government, the army, the KGB, and the USSR Supreme Soviet as well as senior Party officials participated in the coup; the Soviet president had appointed all the coup makers. Incredibly, the West seemed to fail to realize that the coup had ended the Soviet Union, and continued to treat Gorbachev as the principal leader. If he was left with any power, it was essentially because the West imagined he ruled. Yeltsin understood immediately that the Union belonged to the past and acted accordingly. The Russian government swiftly took over all Union property in Russia, and let the other republics do the same in their territories. In this way, a major potential conflict was easily resolved. Yeltsin agreed to participate in the talks for a new Union treaty organized by Gorbachev at the Novoe Ogarevo estate outside Moscow. On November 14, only seven of the original fifteen republics showed any interest in continued political union. As Yeltsin was later to remark, after a year of talks led by Gorbachev, eight republics had in effect left the Union. The last and most crucial departure was that of the Ukraine, which confirmed by a 90 percent majority the wish for full Ukrainian independence in a referendum held on December 1. The

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referendum settled the Union issue; with characteristic speed, Yeltsin acted, and the new Commonwealth of Independent States, formed first by three republics in Bielorus on December 8, was extended to eleven republics in Alma-Ata on December 21. Yeltsin explained that it would have been a disaster to have any such accord without the Ukraine. Its basic demands had to be accepted: that the new formation not be a state and that Moscow not be its capital. In return, Russia secured consent from the other member states to common action on economic reform.

Yeltsin had presented a radical economic reform program in a speech delivered to the Russian parliament on October 28 in which he outlined the radical systemic changes that would have to take place. Its salient features, reminiscent of the Polish reform program of Leszek Balcerowicz, included: almost full price liberalization, unfreezing of wages, freedom of enterprise, liberalization of foreign trade, currency convertibility, massive and speedy privatization, a balanced budget, and strict monetary policies.[13]

In the fall of 1991, at least four different groups competed for the support of Yeltsin with their various reform proposals. Yeltsin had made his choice; as a consequence he appointed the winning team to the Russian government, with Gennady Burbulis becoming first deputy prime minister as chief political advisor, with two young professors of economics, Yegor Gaidar (aged 35) and Alexander Shokhin (aged 40), becoming deputy prime ministers for economic and social affairs respectively. Yeltsin himself took on the premiership, explaining that he assumed full responsibility for the policies of the government. Some fifty young economists, principally from Gaidar's Institute of Economic Policy, assumed senior positions in the government. A young and professionally highly competent cabinet of twenty-three ministers was formed.

The next step, taken on November 19, was a legislative plan comprising some seventy laws and decrees. All were to be worked out within a month, to be adopted before the end of the year. By and large, the plan was adhered to, despite its stringencies. The legal acts were rudimentary, but they covered virtually every aspect of the economy. On January 2, 1992, price controls were lifted and most of the economy was liberalized. Because Yeltsin had declared his intentions beforehand, the shock was mitigated and no serious social unrest was reported. While several republics were restive at the

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outset, one after the other decided to liberalize prices, partly to conform to the commonwealth agreement.

In this too-brief account, certain details have been necessarily omitted. While some of Yeltsin's previous confidants, dismayed by the new policies, came out criticizing him, they were still perceived as Yeltsin's men. Given the dimensions of the reforms, it would be surprising if they did not alienate a number of politicians. The months of September and October had witnessed great political acrimony; the momentum produced by the coup was lost. Still, from a slightly longer perspective, these were minor losses. The process which appears to be so messy from the outside, partly because Gorbachev and the Union supporters tended to dominate the media, and also because the new government was working under extreme time pressures, has concealed the fact that Russia now has a strong president with considerable legitimacy, a competent government, and a coherent reform strategy being implemented without hesitation. The initial liberalization has occurred without major violence; the reform in Russia is swiftly proliferating in the other republics. Because Gorbachev has not participated in any of these more positive steps, and has indeed tried to prevent some, the hope for peaceful further improvement is largely linked to Yeltsin. Gorbachev has become irrelevant.

LESSONS FROM YUGOSLAVIA

The year 1991 saw the demise of Yugoslavia, the other multinational country in Europe that was formerly socialist. The outside world, acting as ostriches, ignored the conflict as long as possible. When it commanded attention, the world called for the status quo ante, an obviously impossible solution. Today, it is commonplace to warn of a similar bellicose development in the former Soviet Union. Such warnings have been voiced both by Gorbachev and by the Russian minister for foreign affairs, Andrei Kozyrev, but with the appropriate implications. In order to avoid "Yugoslavization," a breakup of the republic, it is vital to establish its basic components.

In both Yugoslavia and the USSR, a severe economic crisis preceded the political and nationality crisis. Characteristically, the richest and most liberal republics were among the staunchest separatists in both countries. The major nationalities, the Serbs and the

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Russians, respectively, held power at the center, and dominated the leading republics, boasting large minorities in several of the other republics. A first difference, however, is that Russia went through with democratization and political transition, moving away from communism; Serbia retained its communist leadership. A second crucial difference is that Serbia objected vehemently to the dissolution of Yugoslavia; Russia accepted peacefully the dissolution of the USSR, and indeed provided a framework for transition in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Finally, the Soviet military agreed to this transition; the Yugoslav army has continued to fight for a country that has in effect ceased to exist.

Let us return to the roles of Gorbachev and Yeltsin in this drama. Yeltsin spearheaded the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union, suggesting the transition to a commonwealth that would not be a state; he demanded that the military command submit to this new authority. The hope was that the former Soviet Union might avoid the tragic fate of Yugoslavia, though violence had already extended far into the Caucasus. Gorbachev, however, resisted this devolution of authority until the bitter end, arguing that the commonwealth agreement was unconstitutional, that a situation of the Yugoslav type was developing. He, in fact, was trying to create one. Most worrisome was that Gorbachev called on the military command to obey him. For some days the issue was unresolved; it was only at a meeting with the military command on December 11 that Yeltsin managed to assure himself of the military's allegiance to him and the new commonwealth. The peaceful transition succeeded, at least initially. Gorbachev, however, played both a dangerous and an irresponsible game.[14]

The West, in turn, behaved just as foolishly with regard to the dissolution of the USSR as it did in respect to the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Although it was apparent after the abortive coup in August that both the Soviet Union and Gorbachev were finished, Western countries continued to treat both the Union and its president as the center of power. The West made no positive contribution to the reform process, barely expressing any public support for the liberal reform endeavors. Its experiences in Eastern Europe ought to have recommended a quite different course. A statement by CIA director Robert Gates on December 10 is telling in its absence of any kind of approval; he said:

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> Russian President Yeltsin has articulated bold economic reform plans, but it remains to be seen whether he can carry them out. Market reform will be accompanied by inflation and unemployment that could generate a social explosion, endangering the stability of fledgling democratic governments. The possibility cannot be ruled out that such circumstances could produce a return to authoritarian government.[15]

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

This apparent passivity, even disinterest, not only in the United States but also in Western Europe, is surprising. Is the West incapable of analyzing the new situation? Is there nothing that the West can do immediately? The situation is indeed potentially explosive, but not without hope. At present, there is one strong driving force in Russia with an excellent program. What are the alternatives?

Superficially, the current post-Soviet situation resembles Germany after World War I. The empire is dissolving; possibly the strongest army in the world is being dismantled without having lost a war; reasons for ethnic conflicts abound, with some 27 million Russians living outside Russia, forming the majority of the population in many areas, while 25 million non-Russians live inside Russia; racism is strong, and numerous fascist and racist organizations have been formed; the economy is utterly unstable; there is an obvious hazard of political instability. In short, the risk of an Adolf Hitler emerging in the not-too-distant future seems greater today in Russia than it did in Germany around 1920.[16] The great danger is the creation of a Weimar Russia, incapable of resisting someone like the man who ended up in third place in the Russian presidential elections in June 1991, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who proposes a program with Nazi features.

What is the alternative? The most attractive historical precedent would be Czechoslovakia after World War I. While the other successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire ended up with hyperinflation, Czechoslovakia avoided inflation, and thanks to a stable convertible currency maintained a growing economy, making it possible for the democracy to survive, despite the presence of several large ethnic groups with important disagreements. This continued till German troops marched into the country.

The interwar experiences of Czechoslovakia suggest several keys to successful economic and political transition following on the disso-

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lution of an empire.[17] Czechoslovakia moved very early to gain control of its economic policy, separating her currency from the Austro-Hungarian crown at the earliest possible occasion. Pursuing a strict fiscal and monetary policy—which admittedly led to the murder of its minister of finance, Dr. Alois Rasin—the Czechoslovak economy recovered and democracy survived.

This analogy may have some validity for the former Soviet republics. Rather than seeking to coordinate their economic policies, they would be better off to separate their currencies as soon as possible. The commonwealth agreement provides a basis for such action. Each republic needs to introduce strict financial policies swiftly to escape the plague of hyperinflation.

SPURIOUS POINTS IN THE REFORM PROGRAM

Initially, no document outlining Russia's reform strategy was adopted because after a period where one reform program succeeded the other, without any implementation, people had come to have a negative attitude toward all reform programs. Yeltsin's speech on October 28, 1990, was a substantial presentation.[18] The victorious group of economic reformers spent almost two months at a dacha outside Moscow discussing their program; they provided the ideas for the legislative plan. A substantial program existed, though it was never written down in a single document. Many loose ends prevailed; reliable statistical data were scarce; the whole economy was in a state of extraordinary flux. The program was largely inspired by ideas and experiences of stabilization and systemic change common to Eastern Europe, on which a broad consensus had developed among economists in the West and the East.[19] It settled principal questions, but not all. Privatization and the setting of exchange rates remained open questions, and the dissolution of a union was a specific problem for the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

A speedy transition was crucial. The old Soviet command economy was grinding to a halt; national income in 1991 fell 15 to 20 percent, depending on how much allowance is made for hidden inflation.[20] Shortages were endemic. The budget deficit, out of control, was in the range of 20 to 25 percent of GNP. Since it was not financed, hyperinflation was virtually certain. In such a situation, there was little room for sophisticated measures. Prices had to be liberalized to

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get commodities into the shops. The budget had to be balanced. Monetary policies had to be strict so as to put an end to the inflation, which was expected to be at least 200 percent altogether in January and February 1992, in part because of the monetary overhang, but also because of the wage increases and social benefits that the Russian parliament had pushed through. Inflation could most easily be controlled if the price increases took the form of once-and-for-all price rises, to impede the start of an inflationary process. The more that prices could be liberalized simultaneously, the better.

Another reason for instant and radical liberalization was the terrible disorder in the state administration. Soviet society was enormously corrupt; in the last years organized crime had acquired virtual control of private enterprise in many large Russian cities. To rely on the state apparatus would be to show a preference for corruption and organized crime.

In these circumstances, the Russian government settled for a very far-reaching price liberalization. Price controls remained in place for only about 14 percent of the retail trade turnover, of which vodka alone accounted for 7 percent. The other commodities included bread, milk, one kind of soft cheese, sugar, salt, gasoline, matches, and medicine, but these prices were raised about three times. Rather than rely on the state administration to distribute food stamps or organize rationing, the parliament raised all minimum social benefits by 90 percent, setting the minimum wage at 342 rubles a month.

One problem involved the wholesale price of all kinds of energy, raised initially only about 6.5 times, leaving the price of oil at about one-fiftieth the world market rate, at the very depressed exchange rate. Energy, a vital source of finance and export earnings that must be properly tapped in time, is also decisive for how fast domestic restructuring can develop, and remains a key issue in Russia's relations with the other republics.

The sequencing of systemic changes is much argued about. Some insist that one specific change must not be undertaken before another. Much of this discussion is futile. The Russian government strategy is to attempt to undertake virtually all the changes between December 1991 and April 1992. The important thing is that the systemic changes are launched swiftly, so that they amount to a critical mass. No fine-tuning is possible in the current complex situation. A major theme in the discussion on sequencing has been

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whether price liberalization can occur before privatization and demonopolization. In fact, there is no choice. No formerly socialist country has succeeded in demonopolization and privatization on a significant scale before price liberalization. The Hungarian government tried to demonopolize throughout the 1980s with very little success. The Czechoslovak government tried to demonopolize and privatize in 1990, delaying the liberalization of prices until 1991, but achieved little. Although privatization is proceeding too slowly everywhere, the development of new private enterprise tends to gain enormous speed immediately after price liberalization. Only then are enterprises liberated from intrusive government interventions. They are able to find out what their actual costs are, and prices can be established with some accuracy. Since monopoly is a rational form of organization in a command economy, there are strong forces working against privatization so long as the command economy prevails. Privatization, unfortunately, is a time-consuming process; price liberalization is best undertaken in one spurt; otherwise, relative prices will shift unpredictably. Inflationary expectations will be aroused, reinforcing inflation. Moreover, monopolies are rarely as complete as it appeared under the old command system. In fact, there are multiple producers of most goods, though many enterprises have traditionally produced many goods only for their own needs. No doubt, a few million new private enterprises will be created in Russia alone during the first year of freedom of enterprise and free prices. The practice of monopolization is another reason for the early deregulation of foreign trade and the introduction of a partially convertible currency. Still, it is vital to facilitate swift privatization, preferably through the auctioning off of small enterprises. Cheap sales to the work force of medium-sized enterprises, which hardly possess any capital anyhow, and the free distribution of shares to workers and the population at large of major enterprises is required.

The current Russian government strategy is appropriately called "Russia first." While it does not sound very compelling, it appears to be the best way to proceed. The Soviet government failed to undertake a truly market-oriented reform. Gorbachev spent much of 1991 discussing various union treaties involving economic reform, but nothing came of his effort. Too much time has already been wasted on attempts to reach a multilateral agreement on reform. There are good reasons why such reforms cannot succeed. Any

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successful economic reform must involve the government in two politically arduous decisions: the freeing of prices and the elimination of budget deficits exceeding 20 percent of the GNP. Only a government with strong legitimacy can undertake such decisions—a government that is democratic and nationally legitimate, a democratically elected republican government. In the first public opinion poll after the price liberalization in Russia, 53 percent of the Russians declared that they believed that Yeltsin's reforms would succeed.[21] The price hikes did not prompt the riots so many had warned of. The Russian government made the governments of the Ukraine and Belorussia agree to the tenets of its reform program in a declaration published in connection with the founding of the commonwealth on December 8.[22] Therefore, they had no reason to complain, though they did. Still, within a few days, most of the other republics followed Russia and liberalized their prices. Their leaders benefited from being able to blame Russia for the price increases. A comprehensive transition to free prices had been accomplished smoothly. Preconditions for free trade between the republics had also been created.

Outstanding interrepublican problems are not least budgetary and monetary. If Russia succeeds in balancing its budget, it can initially force the other republics to balance their budgets by withholding financing. As a result, the budget deficits could vanish in 1992. Monetary control is more difficult to achieve, since the reorganization of the central banks was not completed before the end of 1991, in part because of political complications inside Russia. As suggested above, the natural solution is to separate the currencies of at least the major republics in the near future. The tensions between the republics are too great to facilitate the maintenance of a common central bank. In addition, the terms of trade between the republics are bound to alter considerably with the advent of free prices. At that point, it would be natural to readjust the exchange rates of the currencies of the different republics. Thus, the "Russia first" policy has at long last made it possible to launch a fundamental economic reform, which appears to be the best way to handle relations between the republics.

WHAT SHOULD THE WEST DO?

Essentially, all the political and economic preconditions that the West could require to support Russia have been fulfilled. Democratic

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regimes are in place in the key republics; human rights are recognized; radical free market reforms have been launched; the relations between the republics remain peaceful, with the exception of strife between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Few conflicts in the sphere of foreign affairs remain, though there is considerable worry over command and control of the nuclear stockpiles. The obvious conclusion is: this is a golden opportunity for successful peaceful transition in the former Soviet Union; if it is missed, it may not recur. The West ought to provide enthusiastic support for the current economic reforms. There is a lot the West can do.

The initial question was when the shops would again be filled. There is no longer any need to fear that Western aid will delay reform; the systemic change has already been launched. Therefore, the West ought to provide reforming republics with food, medicine, and balance-of-payments support to mitigate the initial shortages and to impede inflation.

The Russian government is allowing the ruble to float freely, since the country has no reserves. The exchange rate is extremely depressed. At the end of 1991, an average monthly wage amounted to 5 dollars at the free exchange rate for cash. Meanwhile, wages in Central Europe stabilized at about 150 dollars a month after liberalization. A plausible assumption is that wages in Russia may stabilize at about half, that is, 75 dollars a month. Undoubtedly, the free exchange rate will start surging in time, but there is a danger that it will stabilize at a very low level. Then the inevitable wage increase will come about primarily through inflation, and not through a revaluation of the ruble. The West could provide vital support for the stabilization of the ruble by setting up a stabilization fund. For Russia, it ought to amount to some 5 billion dollars, and the idea ought to be that it not be used, since its very existence would lend credibility to the ruble. In such a situation, it ought to be possible to keep the value of the currency at 20 rubles per dollar.

Finally, the introduction of a new economic system requires a multitude of new institutions, an infrastructure that did not exist under communism. The essential pillars of a capitalist state must be built. They include a legal system, a corps of lawyers and accountants, a financial system, modern telecommunications, and the like. Training and consultancy is required, and the West could do much to provide both.

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In view of the opportunities and the dangers, it is bewildering to note how little the Western governments have done to date. For a very long time, they did not bother even to pay proper attention to the leadership of the newly independent republics. Interestingly, certain of the leading international economic organizations—the European Community, the IMF, and the World Bank—have done a great deal more at an early stage. It appears as if the Western state bureaucracies abhor bold initiatives, while the international organizations, on the contrary, appear to encourage as much as their members will allow.

CHANCES FOR SUCCESS

It has become commonplace to talk about the former Soviet Union in terms of gloom, verging on disinterest. While the problems are indeed enormous and the distortions left behind after seventy-four years of dreadful communist rule are horrendous, my own perception is that what we have seen since the fall of 1991 is the formation of a far more impressive reform strategy in Russia than we could ever have hoped for. Eastern Europe has shown what the crucial elements of success are, and most are in place: Russia has a popular, democratically elected president in Boris Yeltsin and he speaks as a dedicated liberal democrat. Since he acts in accordance with his words, it would be wise to listen to what he is saying. Systemic compromises, resembling social democracy, have been discarded. The military and the security apparatus appear to have been brought under control. The Union has been peacefully dissolved; its nondemocratic president has been persuaded to resign voluntarily. A comprehensive change of economic system, with new stabilization, has been elaborated and launched by a highly competent group of young economists. The price liberalization has taken place without causing disruption within or among the republics. The element that is conspicuously missing so far is Western cooperation. Admittedly, the situation is extremely complex and precarious, but it is far from hopeless. Since the costs of failure would be tremendous—and because there is broad realization of this fact—things may actually work out reasonably well. Under current circumstances, anything short of large-scale civil war might be considered a success.

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ENDNOTES

[1]M. S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannye rechi i stat'i,* vol. 2 (Moscow: Polizdat, 1987), 95.

[2]M. S. Gorbachev, *Perestroika, New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), 118.

[3]*Time,* 23 December 1991, 14.

[4]I have discussed this at length in A. Åslund, *Gorbachev's Struggle for Economic Reform,* 2d ed. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991).

[5]*Pravda,* 1 December 1989.

[6]*Time,* ibid.

[7]Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "The State of Europe," *Granta: New Europe!* (30) (Winter-Summer 1990): 136–42.

[8]I made that point at the time. See for instance my article in the *New York Times,* 3 June 1990.

[9]*Newsweek,* 6 January 1992, 11–12.

[10]Dominic Lawson, "Time to Face the Muzhick," *Financial Times,* 28–29 December 1991.

[11]Typically, Gorbachev complains about the Russian politicians: "Many of these new politicians are still populists" (*Time,* 23 December 1991, 17). His real problem is that they are popularly elected and, in a democratic spirit, wish to reflect the views of the people.

[12]*Pravda,* 26 October 1990. Åslund, *Gorbachev's Struggle for Economic Reform,* 206–12.

[13]*Sovetskaya Rossiya,* 29 October 1991; Jeffrey Sachs, "Goodwill Is Not Enough," *Economist,* 21 December 1991, 101–4.

[14]I spent these days with the Russian government and saw the drama from the inside. The only Western journalist who seems to have fully noticed what was going on was William Safire in the *New York Times* (*International Herald Tribune,* 13 December 1991, 6).

[15]Statement to the House Armed Services Committee, 10 December 1991.

[16]I wrote an article on this subject in *Dagens Nyheter,* 27 October 1991, and it was reported at length in *Izvestiya,* 14 November 1991, indicating the great sensitivity to this danger.

[17]Thomas J. Sargent, *Rational Expectations and Inflation* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), 40–109. The main original source is Leo Pasvolsky, *Economic Nationalism of the Danubian States* (New York: Macmillan, 1928).

[18]For a brief Western presentation see Jeffrey Sachs, "Goodwill Is Not Enough."

[19]Representative presentations of these views are: Olivier Blanchard, Rudiger Dornbusch, Paul Krugman, Richard Layard, and Lawrence Summers, *Reform in Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991); David Lipton and Jeffrey Sachs,

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"Creating a Market Economy in Eastern Europe: The Case of Poland," in *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, no. 1, 1990, 75–147.

[20]My personal assessment is about 20 percent.

[21]The Russian TV Program "*Itogi*," 5 January 1992.

[22]"Zayavlenie pravitelstv Respubliki Belarus', Rossiiskoi Federatsii i Ukrainy o koordinatsii ekonomicheskoi politiki," *Rossiiskaya gazeta,* 10 December 1991, 1.

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Soviet society claims, it is true, through the loud-speakers of its propagandists, to be on the march towards perfection. People are always ashamed of the real when they measure it against the ideal. Many European intellectuals are in mourning for the socialist myth. Nowhere, apart from Stalinism, have they found the hope of a revolution that would open a new era.

Socialism is an economic-social system whose advantages and disadvantages will continue to be discussed against those of free enterprise and the mechanisms of the market. It is certainly not an absolute good or the accomplishment of human destiny. We may think that the universal diffusion of Communism would, for the first time, bring about a universal empire in the full sense of the term. Such an empire is no longer a dream but a nightmare. Either it would be maintained by an iron despotism and the supranational solidarity of a theocratic bureaucracy, and the peoples would think longingly of the times when the anarchy of national sovereignties raged; or else it would break up into a rivalry of diadochi and schismatics. The wars between irreconcilable disciples of the prophet would arouse regret for those of the kings who did not invoke ideas in the service of their ambitions.

Raymond Aron
From "The Century of Total War," 1954

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Victor Zaslavsky

Nationalism and Democratic Transition in Postcommunist Societies

THE YEAR 1991 ENTERS HISTORY AS THE YEAR when the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the two major multiethnic communist states, ceased to exist. Their sudden and largely unexpected collapse has created a growing sense of uneasiness, insecurity, and perplexity in the international community. These feelings are not limited to the justifiable preoccupation with the fate of the four-million-strong Soviet army and its nuclear arsenal. Both politicians and analysts seem to be perplexed most by an apparent irrationality in the replacement of established political units by a score of new states, often of questionable viability. Future historians will probably seek to explain why Gorbachev's eminently untenable "internationalist" program evoked considerable enthusiasm in the West while much more realistic and down-to-earth Ukrainian and Lithuanian programs of creating nation-states were met with skepticism or even irritation. Or why in the midst of the Yugoslav crisis, after Slovenia and Croatia in perfectly democratic referendums overwhelmingly voted for their independence and the dissolution of Yugoslavia, West European governments kept calling for support of the "united and democratic Yugoslavia." Today it is evident that politicians, the mass media, and public opinion in the West have difficulty coming to grips with a wave of nation-state formation that has not yet crested even in Europe. An image of nationalism as a basically irrational and anachronistic movement still prevails in the Western mentality.

But there is a logic to the current disintegration of multiethnic Soviet-type societies. Its understanding requires an analysis of the

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general factors responsible for the persistence and periodic resurgence of nationalism throughout the twentieth century. It requires also a close examination of the reasons for the rise of nationalism and separatism, specific to Soviet-type societies. In this case analysts are struck by two seemingly contradictory facts. On the one hand, the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, as well as a crisis of political identity in Czechoslovakia, testify to the universality of nationalist sentiments and impulses toward separatism in all multiethnic Soviet-type societies. On the other hand, a number of the independent states, emerging as a result of the Soviet and Yugoslav disintegration, never developed any authentic separatist movement. Their independence was not achieved through self-determination but rather imposed on them from the outside. Examining Soviet nationality policy and its legacies helps explain the universality of ethnic mobilization in postcommunist societies and the crystallization of separatist movements in some ethnoterritorial subunits as well as the absence of separatism in others.

Soviet nationality policy as the system of theoretical assumptions, established practices, and institutional arrangements which regulate nationality relations in a multiethnic state was born of the entire historical development of Soviet society. It was one of the most successful social policies of the Soviet regime, enabling it to reconcile a strong unitary state with a federal structure and to maintain internal stability in a country harboring deep ethnic divisions. A ruthless suppression of nationalist movements, institutionalization of ethnicity, large-scale affirmative action and transfer payments policies, institutional isomorphism of ethnoterritorial units—all these major planks of Soviet nationality policy must be taken into account if both its successful functioning and its eventual disastrous outcome are to be explained.

The basic Marxist understanding of nationalism as a transitory social phenomenon, subordinate to the class struggle, which could nevertheless be used to achieve immediate political goals, proved instrumental for the Bolsheviks' acquisition of power.[1] Before the October Revolution, the right of nations to self-determination had been the centerpiece of the Bolshevik program on the nationality question. Having seized power, the Bolsheviks were confronted with the disintegration of the Russian empire, whose breakup into a conglomeration of small nation-states threatened to undermine the

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territorial and economic foundations of the emergent revolutionary state. Searching for new forms of political organization for the country's multiethnic population, the Bolsheviks turned to federalism as an indispensable instrument for putting together the scattered parts of the empire. Since nation-states had already emerged in the borderlands, the Leninist government had little choice but to build the new federation on the principle of national-territorial autonomy. Thus, Soviet Russia became "the first modern state to place the national principle at the base of its federal structure."[2]

Throughout Soviet history, nationality policy depended upon the state's ability to suppress various nationalist and, especially, separatist movements. The role of the terroristic central state with its powerful coercive apparatus in brutally destroying both real and imaginary ethnic oppositions has been well documented.[3] The omnipotent state preserved and cultivated the federal structure, however, since it performed important, if limited, functions in the maintenance of internal stability. In fact, Soviet federalism never granted any economic or political autonomy to the various ethnic groups within their assigned territories. It was designed as a means of accommodating major nationalities within a unified multiethnic state, with Union republics serving as units of central planning and instruments of personnel policy.

One of the fundamental innovations of federal state formation under Soviet rule was the Stalinist linkage of ethnicity, territory, and political administration. Ethnicity was institutionalized on the group level by the creation of a federation of ethnoterritorial units, governed by indigenous political elites and organized into an elaborate administrative hierarchy. Ethnicity was also institutionalized on the individual level through the introduction of a comprehensive internal passport system which immutably fixed the ethnic affiliation of every Soviet citizen. Over the span of three or four generations, the Soviet bureaucracy consistently treated nationality as an ascriptive characteristic determined by birth. The institutionalization of ethnicity—replicated with some modifications in other multiethnic Soviet-type societies, such as Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia—created the prerequisites for pursuing what might be called "the traditional Soviet nationality policy." It combined divisive measures and integrative techniques to prevent the organization of alliances between neighboring ethnic groups, to undermine the capacity of any nationality to

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act as a unified entity, and to co-opt the crucial sectors within each nationality into the Soviet regime.

The unquestionable success of Soviet nationality policy in controlling and containing ethnic nationalism largely depended upon institutional arrangements that segmented Soviet society along lines of nationality and social class. First, the federal political-administrative system served as an elaborate framework for maintaining ethnic inequality. The highest political authorities divided ethnic groups into those with recognized territory and those without such territory. The former were organized into a four-rank hierarchy of statehood corresponding to varying amounts of ethnic rights and privileges. Moreover, in accordance with a divide-and-conquer policy the borders between ethnic territories were often drawn arbitrarily, in obvious contradiction to historical traditions or existing ethnodemographic situations. In many regions, especially Central Asia, this policy effectively prevented the emergence of supraethnic groupings and alliances threatening to the unitary state. Second, Soviet nationality policy worked in tandem with bureaucratic arrangements which stratified each nationality by class and territory.[4] Thus, social and geographical barriers between the urban population and collective farmers were in place in each Soviet republic for the past half century. Collective farmers were denied internal passports and prevented from leaving the countryside, while urban dwellers had no right to buy or build houses in rural areas. The so-called "system of closed cities," under which special permission was required for permanent residence in major urban centers, represented another major divisive measure. It established an important social and territorial barrier between university graduates, who usually resided in closed cities, and the rest of the ethnic population, and thereby perpetuated privileged access to higher education and middle class positions from one generation of the ethnic middle class to the next. Moreover, special mechanisms and practices were developed to make ethnic political elites completely dependent on central authority while depriving them of any significant ethnic power base and increasing the social distance between them and their ethnic constituencies. Finally, the bureaucratic registration of ethnic origin as an ascriptive category established rigid barriers between different nationalities. It served as the main determinant of ethnic identification and self-identification, preventing ethnic assimilation or change of ethnic

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identity, and providing an objective basis for affirmative action policies oriented toward territorially based nationalities.

Complementing its techniques of segmentation, Soviet nationality policy included a host of integrative techniques crucial for maintaining the stability of a multinational empire. Even if the regime's dominant ideology treated nationality as a temporary phenomenon and predicted the rapprochement and eventual fusion of different Soviet nationalities in some unspecified future, the basic goals of Soviet nationality policy remained pragmatic, essentially similar to those of any modern multiethnic state. First, the state tried to secure its territorial integrity and internal stability by suppressing various separatist movements. Second, recognizing that the modern state requires "a mobile, literate, culturally standardized, interchangeable population,"[5] the Soviet leadership relied on forced modernization to eliminate substantial cultural differences between nationalities and to guarantee their integration into the Soviet system. A twin policy of transfer payments and institutional isomorphism of the republics, combined with a policy of preferential treatment to titular nationalities within their own territories, represented the Soviet response to problems of unequal development.

The Soviet regime tried to achieve equalized and comprehensive development of Union republics through various measures of redistribution from more to less developed ethnic regions. In fact, studies of the Soviet budget demonstrate that poorer republics had, on the whole, higher rates of investment in addition to receiving transfer payments.[6] This policy of equalization never achieved its professed goal, since in many cases the developmental gap between the republics was in fact preserved or even exacerbated. The attempted imposition of a uniform superstructure on an enormously diverse set of cultures succeeded, however, in one important respect: the share of college-educated specialists—the new middle class of Soviet society—became increasingly similar throughout the Soviet republics.[7] In fact, Soviet nationality policy was to a large extent designed as a class-specific policy aimed at the comprehensive integration of ethnic political elites and educated middle classes into the Soviet regime.

From its very inception, Soviet federalism fostered the policy of preferential treatment of the representatives of local nationalities within their own territories with regard to access to higher education and placement in managerial and administrative positions. A special

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quota system for assuring access of the indigenous populations to higher education had emerged already in the 1920s, together with an intensive program of "indigenizing" *(korenizatsiya)* local administrations. In the post-Stalin period this policy of giving preferential treatment to titular nationalities in their own republics was intensified. The basic strategy consisted of the introduction of institutional isomorphism in the Union republics. All obtained identical state, bureaucratic, and educational structures, analogous research and development establishments, including republican academies of science with comprehensive sets of research institutes and identical organizations for the production and distribution of culture, from state publishing houses and ministries of culture and education to the "creative unions" of writers, artists, architects, and other cultural producers.

The policy of preferential treatment of nationalities within their territories was designed to recruit educated and ambitious members of nationalities to the ranks of local political elites and educated middle classes. Since the mid-1950s, most leadership positions and high-ranking posts in practically all the republics belonged to members of local nationalities.[8] As the republics' political elites were mainly established through appointment by the central Party apparatus, they remained beholden to the central authority rather than to their ethnic constituencies, and could be counted upon to follow orders from the center. In addition, a well-developed system of control made any attempt on the part of local political elites at fostering nationalist sentiments and aspirations both risky and unlikely.

Control over higher education has always been a crucial aspect of nationality policy. For decades competition for university admission among applicants of various nationalities was regulated by a quota system which guaranteed considerable advantage to the titular nationalities residing in their own republics. The central leadership, furthermore, was preoccupied with creating employment for the representatives of ethnic intelligentsias, expanding local bureaucracies, financing republican academies of science and research centers, and supporting ethnic unions of writers, painters, or filmmakers. Recently published statistical data illustrate the success of the policy of preferential treatment of indigenous nationalities within their own ethnoterritorial units: in the majority of the republics the proportion

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of the titular nationality members among the administrative-managerial personnel is higher than the share of the titular nationalities in the republics' populations at large.[9]

Any social class or group within a given nationality may be permeated with nationalist feelings and separatist aspirations. Ethnicity, once politicized, becomes a fact of life as real as any material concern.[10] Nevertheless, different social classes and groups are receptive to nationalist ideas in different, structurally determined ways. The central role of educated classes and indigenous intelligentsias in promoting ethnic mobilization and organizing secessionist movements is well known. The structural position of educated classes which are the principal bearers of a "shared, literate, educationally transmitted culture"[11] make them especially receptive to the appeals of nationalism in industrial societies. As Miroslav Hroch has observed, "Both the old and the new middle classes become the main champions of 'nationalism', both in state-nations and in small nations that experienced the nation-building process."[12] Soviet sociological research confirms conclusions reached in earlier Western studies: in the USSR, as in other modern multinational states, ethnic political elites and middle classes were the groups primarily responsible for ethnic politicization and those most prone to use nationalism as an instrument of competition against other ethnic groups for economic and political privileges.[13]

By protecting the educational and occupational interests of the indigenous elites and middle classes, Soviet nationality policy was unusually successful in integrating the groups most receptive to nationalist ideas into the political regime or, at least, in neutralizing their separatist aspirations. The potentially explosive ethnic situation, in which educated members of an ethnic minority find their social mobility blocked by the majority group, has by and large been avoided.

In sum, federal structure, nationality registration in the internal passport system, preferential treatment of territorially based nationalities, and protection of the educational and occupational interests of ethnic middle classes and political elites all contributed to the maintenance of stable nationality relations in the Soviet Union. A powerful coercive apparatus succeeded in suppressing the activities of dissident nationality groups and in demoting and punishing those local leaders who tried to develop indigenous power bases. During

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the Brezhnev period, Soviet institutions demonstrated a seemingly unlimited capacity to combat ethnic nationalism, managing to keep the level of interethnic tensions relatively low. For their part, those territorially based nationalities that preserved a degree of autonomous national existence learned to manipulate Soviet nationality policy to their advantage.

Soviet nationality policy was a uniform policy applied to a variety of different ethnic groups. In the period of extensive development and relatively abundant resources, it proved capable of generating substantial compliance. With the passage of time, however, the inherent defects of this policy became increasingly pronounced. This essentially static policy, while suitable in maintaining the status quo, lacked the dynamism necessary to anticipate and react to changes in ethnic relations. When a uniform and essentially immutable policy is applied to very different nationalities at quite different stages of socioeconomic and demographic development, this policy helps to preserve and exacerbate regional inequalities. In the face of growing territorial imbalances in labor productivity and in the supply of natural resources and labor, regional conflicts over economic choices intensified. Interethnic tensions multiplied because of demographic growth, migration, and changes in the socioeconomic status of various nationalities. Yet Soviet nationality policy did not address their structural causes, and instead merely suppressed the symptoms by eroding the nationalities' capacity to act as unified entities in defense of their ethnic interests. Thus, the twin policies of nationality registration by way of internal passports and preferential treatment of indigenous nationalities within their administrative units proved to be antimeritocratic, resulting in the rise of parasitism and the diminishing prestige of productive work. These policies created strong dissatisfaction in minorities deprived of their own territories and in those citizens who did not belong to the titular nationality of a republic. In many cases these policies also resulted in the emergence of a potentially explosive ethnic division of labor (as in the major cities of the Baltic and Central Asian republics), in which members of indigenous nationalities dominated occupations and professions requiring university education, while migrants, especially Russians, were overwhelmingly employed as blue-collar workers.[14] In the republics where titular nationalities were transformed into numerical minorities because of massive influxes of other nationalities, the

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situation had become tense well before the advent of *perestroika*. The dissatisfaction of the indigenous population, which feared for its traditional privileges, and, indeed, its ethnic survival, combined with an acute sense of injustice on the part of the disadvantaged majority. The first cases of ethnic unrest in the Gorbachev era were registered in Kazakhstan and Yakutiya, the republics characterized precisely by this type of ethnic relations. Moreover, the policy of protecting the occupational interests of ethnic educated classes by co-opting them into expanding bureaucracies has become untenable. The present conditions in the Soviet labor force, where roughly one person in six holds a bureaucratic job, necessitate considerable cuts in bureaucratic personnel. Most importantly, the success of Soviet nationality policy was inextricably linked to a strong central state pursuing a strategy of extensive economic growth. By the 1980s, however, the resources necessary for maintaining both a strong central state and extensive growth of the economy had by and large been exhausted. The traditional nationality policy became dysfunctional for the Soviet regime once its rising costs began to contribute to the general crisis of the system. The Soviet Union as a multiethnic empire, relatively stable and viable at the stage of extensive economic growth when resources were abundant and massive coercion was an effective method of social mobilization, turned into an increasingly unstable and counterproductive form of social organization. Thus, the Soviet Union provides yet another example of the irony of history whereby the same social arrangements and policies that serve for a time as pillars of internal stability can suddenly become counterproductive, leading to instability and profound tension.

The principal results of several decades of Soviet nationality policy which directly bear on the current explosion of nationalism may be summarized as follows. Soviet nationality policy, despite its professed goal of subverting ethnic loyalties and destroying ethnic differences, promoted and accelerated the process of nation building. During the Soviet period various populations which had not previously developed national consciousness acquired national identities and turned into nations.[15] The Soviet state erected virtually impenetrable barriers between the different nationalities and by way of bureaucratic means tied individuals to their nationality groups. National cohesion was further reinforced by the creation of firm links between nationalities, their territories, and their political administrations. Also, the policy of

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preferential treatment of territorially based nationalities led to the growing ethnic homogenization of many ethnoterritorial units. Most importantly, in all Union republics there emerged such preconditions for independent existence as (1) their own administratively defined territories populated by titular nationalities, (2) their own political elites and educated middle classes, and (3) continuous traditions of cultural production in local languages. As Boris Strugatsky, a popular Russian writer, has argued, "The republics exhibit the full set of characteristics of independent states that have lost their independence."[16]

This brief analysis of the major planks and legacies of Soviet nationality policy helps explain both the ubiquity of ethnic mobilization in the former Soviet Union (and other multiethnic communist states) and the emergence of strong nationalist and separatist movements in certain parts of the Soviet empire. Differentiating between the concepts of ethnic mobilization and nationalism, which are often used interchangeably, is imperative for an understanding of nationality relations in the postcommunist societies. Ethnic mobilization may be defined as potential or actual participation in joint actions when collective membership is based on belonging to the same ethnic group (nationality). It is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the emergence of nationalism. The latter is understood as a political doctrine and social movement which strives "to make culture and polity congruent"[17] and has the principal aim of creating a modern nation-state possessing sovereignty over a given territory.[18] The upsurge of ethnic mobilization is a universal and inevitable reaction to the collapse of multiethnic Soviet-type societies. An analysis of the Soviet case suggests the following main reasons for its universality.

Initially, ethnic mobilization was one of the unintended and unforeseen consequences of the diminishing role of coercion, greater freedom of expression and access to information generated by *perestroika*. As Zbigniew Brzezinski notes, Gorbachev's reforms "created an opportunity for long-suppressed national grievances to surface."[19] But even in the absence of interethnic grievances and historical animosities, nationality gained dramatically in social importance. The Soviet state created a particular system of social stratification. It divided the population into a variety of functional groups and redistributed national income in favor of those deemed by the political leadership of crucial importance for the internal stability

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and social reproduction of the regime. This elaborate system of state-engineered stratification collapsed along with the state responsible for its emergence. The institutionalization of nationality made it the only officially recognized distinction among Soviet citizens. In a situation of growing social disintegration, nationality remains a major means of individual psychological defense and a seemingly natural bond uniting otherwise atomized members of a decayed society into meaningful groups. While the profound social crisis intensifies competition for scarce resources, chances of achieving goals through individual effort are often diminished. Individuals resist the decline in the standard of living by increasingly recurring to collective action. Activating kinship, friendship, and ethnic ties has been one of the most common modes of adaptation in crisis-ridden Soviet-type societies.[20] As a result, nationality has become the most potent base of social mobilization. In the words of the Soviet philosopher Grigorij Pomerants, "Nationalities have turned into political parties."[21]

As the Soviet case demonstrates, the energy of ethnic mobilization may be released in three main directions: against identifiable minorities living in the midst of a majority, especially if the latter represents the titular nationality to which a particular territory has been assigned; against any neighboring ethnoterritorial formation with the aim of vindicating historical grievances and redrawing borders; against the imperial center and the hegemonistic nationality with the aim of organizing a proper independent nation-state. Various combinations of goals are always possible and the choice of the target, against which ethnic mobilization is directed, depends predominantly on the interests and agendas of local political elites and the educated middle classes.

The best examples of heterophobic ethnic mobilization against minorities are the Central Asian republics. The frightening combination there of demographic, ecological, and administrative crises during the Brezhnev period[22] has resulted in a considerable decline in per capita income, rapid deterioration of the ecological situation, and growing unemployment, followed by intense interethnic conflict. In most instances, conflict arises over the distribution of resources and privileges within a given republic and competition is structured along ethnic lines. Under these conditions ethnic mobilization is directed mainly against the republic's own minorities. Born of despair and

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backwardness, this ethnic activism easily acquires a destructive character, giving rise to policies of domination, exclusion, and discrimination against identifiable minorities. Thus, the 1988–1989 pogroms in Uzbekistan directed against Meshketian Turks, deported to the area by the Stalinist administration, seen by the local population as aliens and envied for their allegedly higher standard of living, forced the Moscow government to organize a rapid evacuation of Meshketians from the Uzbek republic. Their jobs, houses, and belongings were left behind as a prize for the majority population.

The virtual absence of separatist claims has been one of the most intriguing features of the situation in Soviet Central Asia. During the period of *perestroika*, local intellectuals and politicians continued to rely on state intervention, asking for massive investments needed to stave off the region's economic decline and prevent the further growth of unemployment and other social dislocations. Throughout the years of *perestroika*, the Central Asian republics remained staunch supporters of Gorbachev's efforts to save the Soviet Union with its strong central state. The absence of separatism in these republics, traditionally seen by analysts as major threats to the Soviet unitary state, attests to the achievements of Soviet nationality policy. The Central Asian educated classes have always been its main beneficiaries. Their very size has been determined not so much by the requirements of the modern economy as by the redistributive policies of the central state seeking to secure internal stability. The proposed transition to a market economy undermines the very livelihood of these truly state-dependent groups. Local intellectuals are well aware that the economy of independent Central Asian republics will be unable to sustain the production and distribution of culture, while politicians are frightened by the prospect that in the absence of a central redistributive state they might have to cope with a demographic explosion in their region. The December 1991 decision by the Slavic republics to dissolve the Soviet Union has imposed unwanted independence on the Central Asian republics. A perpetuation of the process of deurbanization and deindustrialization, which has been unfolding in the region in the past two decades, would in all likelihood keep generating archaic, preindustrial forms of ethnic activism characterized by interethnic clashes and discrimination against minorities.

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The Caucasian republics exemplify the case of ethnic mobilization against a neighboring nationality which results in a rather traditional nationalist movement. The century-long strife between Christian Armenians and Muslim Turks continued within the confines of the Soviet Union. For many decades Armenians have been campaigning for the return of the Nagorno-Karabakh province, populated by Armenians but turned over to Azerbaijan in 1923. The situation has been greatly exacerbated by the historical animosity between the two populations. Since 1988, with the progressive weakening of the central state, bloody clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan have turned into a kind of ethnic war which has already produced thousands of casualties and several hundreds of thousands of ethnic refugees. On both sides this war has reinforced nationalist sentiments and demands for the creation of independent nation-states. In Azerbaijan there now circulates the even more ambitious project of creating a "Great Azerbaijan," which would incorporate, in addition to Nagorno-Karabakh, parts of northern Iran populated by Azeri Turks.

The situation in the Caucasus, with its continuous Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict, suppression of ethnic minorities, and violation of human rights by the Gamsakhurdia government in Georgia, seems to confirm almost to the letter the traditional assessment of nationalism and nationalist politics by liberals and especially by Marxists. Nationalism here exhibits a political culture characterized by intolerance and rejection of social compromise. Its goal is limited to creating a nation-state which establishes control over a given territory and promotes ethnic homogeneity. It tends to exhaust itself in territorial disputes and interethnic wars and threatens to provoke a new wave of Balkanization on a world scale. This old-style nationalism quite clearly neither provides a viable principle for economic and political reorganization of the world nor guarantees a stable and lasting political order. As Eric Hobsbawm argues, "The characteristic nationalist movements of the late twentieth century are essentially negative or rather divisive." He concludes that nationalism in our time is a purely anachronistic and counterproductive movement because of the "sharply diminished relevance of 'nation' and 'nation-state' to the political and economic structure of the globe."[23] Taking the recent developments in the Caucasus as a paradigm of nationalist politics, it is easy to agree with Hobsbawm's conclusions. But it

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would be a grave mistake if analysts, concentrating on the well-known consequences of traditional nationalism and premodern ethnocentric mobilization, overlooked important new characteristics and modernizing functions of the nationalist revival in the most developed parts of the former Soviet Union, such as the Baltic and Slavic republics.

Significantly, the separatist project in the Baltic republics or the Ukraine has found almost universal support in all social strata of the indigenous populations. Moreover, it has generally been accepted by many representatives of the ethnic minorities residing in these republics, including Russians. This crucial fact can be explained by the virtual confluence of the separatist and the democratic transition programs, observable recently in the most developed Soviet republics. The true novelty of Baltic nationalism, for example, consists in its final goal, which is not limited to regaining sovereignty lost by the Baltic states as a result of the 1940 Stalinist annexation. The exit from the Soviet Union and political independence are seen by local political elites and populations at large as necessary preconditions for the return to Europe, to a "normal" economic system and political democracy. The principal objective of Baltic nationalism is re-entrance into the world market and into the community of developed nations by joining such supranational organizations as the European Community, the emerging Baltic Commonwealth, or the European Free Trade Association. The Slavic and Baltic republics share with postcommunist Eastern Europe a new nationalist myth which unites and animates both the leaders and the rank-and-file members of these nationalist movements. It is the myth of belonging to European culture, the myth of return to real or imaginary European roots, the myth of normal development brutally interrupted by the Bolshevik experiment or the Russian aggression or both. As Timothy Garton Ash has written about East European countries, "If you ask what is the basic underlying model for the new relations between these states, and for the resolution of their outstanding national, ethnic, and economic conflicts, then the answer is clear. The basic model is the European Community—the one and only, real existing common European home."[24] The myth of the common European home expresses both the sense of cultural affinity and the growing sense of relative deprivation and tremendous frustration in postcommunist countries. It testifies to the weight of the demonstration effect of the

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advanced nations, to "the continuity of the pressures that Western material standards placed on the institutions and stability of these regimes."[25] It suggests that the way to join the global material civilization created by Western progress remains a catch-up modernization.

The true meaning of this new nationalism may be adequately understood only if its program is seen in totality: nationalism's traditional "divisive" goal of creating a nation-state is inextricably connected with its search for unity and integration and its readiness to abide by the principles of democracy, contract, and international division of labor. The abandonment of utopian projects, the decision to return to the common European home and to resume "normal" development (understood in a somewhat idealized form as the West European and North American experience) suggest a basic strategy for national revival in the most developed republics of the former Soviet empire. Only the transition to political democracy and a market economy can create the conditions necessary for catch-up modernization. But why should programs of transition to a market economy and democracy in these republics be invariably accompanied by an upsurge of nationalist sentiments which find their political expression in separatism? Does separatism possess a proper reformist content, or does it simply represent irrational popular sentiments dominated by hatred of the exploitative Soviet system with its phony internationalist ideology—hatred skillfully manipulated by power-thirsty local political elites? My contention is that the proposed reforms in multiethnic postcommunist societies cannot be carried out without a separatism that would help to create a feasible democratic alternative to an imperial world order.

The task of designing and justifying programs of national revival, of creating a real blueprint of desired reforms presupposes a realistic assessment of the causes of the Soviet collapse. During the years of *perestroika*, Soviet economists and social scientists advanced new interpretations of the Soviet historical experience. Brushing aside official Soviet statistics, they finally arrived at an accurate understanding of the nature of their own society. The Stalinist system which safely survived all reformist attempts is now seen for what it has always been—a military-industrial empire whose collapse has been caused by the combined effects of the anti-innovative character of its centrally planned economy and the devolution of its military-

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industry-driven modernization. Once the veil of secrecy which cloaked the activities of the central state with its enormous military expenditures was removed, the role of the military-industrial complex was finally revealed: this largely parasitic social structure squandered the country's best natural and human resources and virtually suffocated technological progress in the Soviet economy as a whole.[26] The policy of extensive growth, based on an increasingly obsolete technology and aggravated by the wastefulness of the military-industrial complex, arrested industrialization. This form of social degeneration, fraught with grave economic and ecological crises, manifests itself in all Soviet-type societies but is particularly pronounced in the former Soviet Union. Andrei Amalrik's old forecast of the Soviet Union's collapse under a double burden of economic stagnation and national identity crisis has proven to be very accurate.[27] The Soviet state attempted both to close the developmental gap to the industrialized West through forced industrialization and to create a melting pot on the basis of Soviet Russian culture. It failed on both counts. The ensuing explosion of separatism, especially in the most industrially developed nationalities, is inevitable. Under conditions of profound systemic crisis they see no reasons to justify their common citizenship in single states. In other terms, the rise of separatist movements in the Baltic and Slavic republics can to a large extent be attributed to the combined effects of the reaction to arrested industrialization and ethnoterritorial revolt against the redistributive central state.

Students of nationalism from Friedrich List to Ernest Gellner have stressed the close relation between nationalism and modernization.[28] Thus, Alexander Gerschenkron argues that nationalism helps "to break through the barriers of stagnation in a backward country, to ignite the imaginations of men, and to place their energies in the service of economic development." He defines nationalism as "an ideology of delayed industrialization" which creates faith "that the golden age lies not behind but ahead of mankind."[29] Gellner emphasizes another aspect of the relation between nationalism and industrialization in his claim that the developmental state must also be a national one, since "the requirements of communication in the new intellect-intensive mode of production presuppose a shared, literate, educationally-transmitted culture."[30]

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In multiethnic Soviet-type societies nationalism continues to be a necessary precondition of modernization for a variety of reasons. First, the transition to a market economy presupposes large-scale decentralization of the economy and of political power. But this task is difficult to accomplish, since in a multiethnic country built on the ethnoterritorial principle "ethnic heterogeneity creates near-automatic imperatives towards centralization."[31] Second, as Soviet economists have already recognized, the introduction of a Western-type market in the Soviet Union will take time. Meanwhile, overcoming administrative chaos and introducing elementary economic and juridical order in separate regions is much easier than in the enormous and practically unmanageable Soviet Union.[32] Third, in a time of painful transformation, the legitimating and mobilizational resources of nationalism become crucial for any reformist leadership. Characteristically, Yeltsin's, Kravchuk's, and Landsbergis's governments seek popular acceptance as nonpartisan patriotic forces eager to represent the overriding interests of their citizens. Finally, the most fundamental reason for the rise of nationalism and separatism is that enormous economic, cultural, and demographic differences between nationalities make impossible the realization of the proposed transition to a market democracy in the Soviet Union as a whole. For Soviet reformers such as Gorbachev this point has proved the most difficult to comprehend.

From the very beginning of *perestroika*, both politicians and political scientists were divided between two strategies of radical reform. The first group, invoking the Spanish and South Korean experience, favored an authoritarian transition to the market and to democracy, with an "iron hand" reformist leadership introducing marketization reforms from above.[33] The problem with this approach was that the only instruments to implement reforms in Soviet society remained the centralized Communist Party and its coercive apparatus, the organizations congenitally averse to market competition, decentralization, and liberal democracy. The recognition of this fact, rather than strategic mistakes or a lack of will, conditioned Gorbachev's turning to the alternative strategy of "crafting democracy"[34]: gradual democratization was supposed to generate its own momentum and market democracy, expected to eventually emerge as a superior form of social organization. Correspondingly, Gorbachev and his group of early reformers from the "generation of the 1960s,"

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believers in "socialism with a human face," adopted a popular-front policy in defense of *perestroika*. These popular fronts were supposed to be concerned with civic and democratic issues and to become the instruments of mass participation in the political process supporting the reformers in their struggle against the entrenched Party-state apparatus. To the bitter surprise of reformers steeped in the Marxist international creed, these fronts rapidly turned into nationalist and separatist movements.[35]

With the benefit of hindsight we can now easily see the fallacy of both alternative strategies of Soviet reform. There never was and there cannot be a strategy that reconciles democratization and marketization reform with the task of preserving the territorial integrity of the Soviet Union. Soviet nationalities differ dramatically in their political and industrial cultures, and especially in their demographic behavior. It would not be an exaggeration to compare the Soviet Union to a state which unites a Norway and a Pakistan. Such a political construct can hardly survive under conditions of market integration and political pluralism, for a heavy dose of coercion rather than forces of market integration would be required to keep such a society together. Because of glaring disparities in economic, cultural, and social development, the demands and interests of major ethnic components of the Soviet Union have become very different and, in the absence of a powerful redistributive center, even irreconcilable.

The phenomenon of regionalism is universally known in countries with pronounced regional inequalities. It manifests itself in dissatisfaction, protest, or even revolt of the most productive parts of a country against a central government which redistributes the state budget in favor of less developed regions in order to achieve a degree of equalization and political stability. If such redistributive policy goes on for decades without closing the developmental gap, mass mobilization in the more productive regions is likely to arise, a recent example being the political success of the Lombard League in Italy. In multiethnic countries in which territorially based nationalities exhibit profound differences in economic and cultural development, the redistribution of resources by the state creates the conditions for the rise of nationalist and separatist movements.[36] Regionalism here turns into ethnoregionalism and separatism. The postcommunist Soviet Union and Yugoslavia are thus inherently unstable.

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The Soviet Union represents probably the most dramatic case of coexistence within the same country of such radically different socioeconomic systems as industrial and traditional societies. Traditional society might be identified, for simplicity, in demographic terms as a society which, having experienced a population explosion, has little control over its demographic growth. By contrast, industrial society is able to control its population size and has often reached the stage of zero population growth. The type of tensions created by their coexistence can be easily illustrated by comparing Latvians and Estonians (who between 1979 and 1989 grew by 1.4 and 0.7 percent respectively) with Tajiks and Uzbeks (who registered a 45.5 and a 34.0 percent growth in the same decade). Under these conditions, the Baltic republics offer a demographic argument that serves as a powerful justification of separatism. Departing from rather incontrovertible postulates that a country's resources are finite and that cultural and linguistic diversity is a normal and desirable human condition, they arrived at the conclusion that explosively growing populations not only lower the Baltic standard of living but also represent a direct threat to their very existence as cultural and linguistic units. The Baltic population sees state redistribution as a policy of extracting the Baltic surplus to subsidize the demographic explosion elsewhere that, in turn, creates potential migrants to the Baltic territory. This understanding provokes one of the most elementary and powerful of all ethnic sentiments—an acute preoccupation with ethnic survival. Since a regionally differentiated demographic policy in a multiethnic country is hardly a viable proposition, separation remains the only alternative. "Adding another few dozen to the member-states of the UN will not give any of them any more control over their affairs than they had before they became independent," writes Hobsbawm.[37] But Hobsbawm's skepticism is not justified. Had Latvia remained a part of the Soviet Union, the Latvians would soon have become a minority within their own republic. And it is doubtful that their language and culture would have survived for long under the growing pressure of immigration. An independent Latvia, however, will be able to preserve its language and culture.

The only historical analogy to the Soviet transition remains the experience of the defeated Germany and Japan, whose militarized and highly monopolized economies had also been dominated by

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strong central states. Postwar Germany and Japan were able to make a startling economic recovery. This, however, required two decades of hard work on the part of the population that understood the change in terms of sheer survival, as well as considerable foreign investment. The presence of foreign occupied troops was also indispensable since they guaranteed internal stability and facilitated the "remaking of political culture," creating an environment favorable to the "conscious manipulative change of fundamental political attitudes."[38] But the basic precondition of their recovery was the thorough destruction of major economic and political structures and forces of the old order capable of obstructing the inevitably painful transition to democracy and free enterprise. By contrast, the Soviet Union enjoys none of the favorable circumstances characteristic of postwar Germany and Japan. Referring to the centrality of the military-industrial complex in the Soviet economy and its paramount responsibility for the Soviet crisis, Yuri Chernichenko, a leader of the Russian Peasant Party, writes that the Soviet system has suffered a "crushing military defeat in a time of peace."[39] But in the Soviet case this defeat is merely metaphorical in the sense that no external agency capable of taking responsibility for the maintenance of internal stability or the introduction of reforms has appeared on Soviet territory. *Perestroika* was essentially a political revolution that destroyed the old political order but neither shattered the institutional structure of the economy nor changed the state-dependent mentality of the population. The attempted August 1991 coup, organized by the leaders of the military-industrial complex and supported by the upper echelons of the army and Party functionaries,[40] demonstrated that these all-Union institutions remain bastions of resistance to reforms. Moreover, as a leading Polish economist concludes on the basis of the Polish reformist experience, "it is impossible to implement a radical transition to a market economy in the conditions of a relatively normal functioning of the socialist economy. The situation has to get worse and then destabilize to such a degree that a radical institutional overhaul will become the only way out of the crisis."[41] The disintegration of the Soviet Union into a host of smaller, ethnically more homogeneous and more cohesive nation-states represents the *structural equivalent* of a military defeat that destroys the institutions and forces of the old regime. As a result, organized resistance to marketization reforms loses its institutional and social

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base. Furthermore, the conditions allowing the reproduction of the state-dependent workers hostile to innovation and productive work and receptive to the ideology and practice of nonmeritocratic egalitarianism and redistribution have also been shattered. The destruction of the Soviet empire by forces of nationalism and separatism represents, therefore, a necessary precondition for a successful transition to political democracy and a market economy.

An unbiased analysis of the role of nationalism and separatism in the present great transformation of Soviet-type societies helps dispel the traditional perception of nationalism as a largely divisive, xenophobic, and therefore anachronistic movement. The liberal-democratic potential of the new nationalism needs to be fully appreciated. Exit from communism will inevitably be a long and protracted process. Market reforms will lead to the re-creation and articulation of the economic and cultural interests of the successor states of the former USSR and Yugoslavia. The emerging market will also force the new states to make a realistic assessment of their position within the international division of labor. An active search for new forms and principles of international integration will accompany the post-communist transformation. Joining the international community of industrialized nations would require aspiring members to comply with prevailing standards of international conduct, in particular regarding the inviolability of human rights. The rapid evolution of the Lithuanian government might serve as the best illustration of the process. Initially it declared itself the representative of the Lithuanian nation and adopted some measures regarded as offensive or discriminatory by ethnic minorities. But later, largely as a result of international pressure, it corrected its previous policies, thereby justifying its new claim to be the representative of the citizens of the Lithuanian republic rather than solely of the members of the Lithuanian nation.

The 1991 events demonstrate, however, that certain less salutary consequences of the communist collapse seem also unavoidable. The emergence of nation-states in permanent conflict over territory and resources, of national governments pursuing ethnic homogeneity and state consolidation through discrimination and suppression of minorities, of local leaders fomenting interethnic hatred—all these phenomena have been registered in various parts of the former communist world. Still, looking at the situation at the end of the twentieth century in historical perspective, today there are greater

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possibilities for international cooperation and conflict resolution than ever before.[42] The principle that human rights do not represent an internal issue to be left to the discretion of sovereign governments, even if the latter have been democratically elected by the majority, enjoys growing support. An understanding that a government's obligations to protect the rights of individuals and ethnic minorities may be accorded precedence over right to national sovereignty is also gaining ground. Most importantly, an international order has been created which is capable of monitoring violations of human rights and of condemning and even resisting the xenophobic and destructive tendencies of traditional nationalism. This fact underscores the enormous responsibility of the international community to pursue actively a policy facilitating the peaceful coexistence of nation-states emerging on the territory of the late USSR and Yugoslavia, and to forge new principles of supranational integration. The unprecedented situation of the communist breakup calls for new solutions to old problems. As the legacy of Soviet nationality policy comes to be recognized, territorial exchanges and organized population transfers might become necessary. These issues should acquire a legitimate place on the agendas of the international community and its organizations. International mediation and control over these processes remain the best way to protect the stability of the international order. In the new conditions stiff economic sanctions against regimes consistently violating human rights, while often ineffective in the short run, prove to be a considerable long-term deterrent. The time has probably come to realize the Rooseveltian idea of an international police force capable of nipping in the bud such bloody conflicts as the Armenian-Azerbaijan or Serbo-Croatian wars.

The disintegration of Soviet-type societies may well spell the beginning of a freer, more prosperous life for the many millions of subjects of the now-defunct communist regimes and permit the creation of a more stable and less wasteful international order.

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Tuzenbach: In years to come, you say, life on earth will be marvellous, beautiful. That's true. But to take part in that now, even from afar, one must prepare, one must work. . .

Yes, one must work. Perhaps you think—this German is getting over-excited. But on my word of honour, I'm Russian. I cannot even speak German. My father is Orthodox. . .

Anton Chekhov
From "Three Sisters," 1922

The only criterion capable of public defense is whether the new rulers are less corrupt and grasping, or more just and merciful, or whether there is no change at all, but the corruption, the greed, and the tyranny merely find victims other than those of the departed rulers.

Elie Kedourie
From "Nationalism," 1960

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Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan

Political Identities and Electoral Sequences: Spain, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia

WHEN THINKING ABOUT TRANSITIONS TO DEMOCRACY we tend to assume that what is challenged is the nondemocratic regime and that with democracy a new legitimate system is established. However, in many countries the crisis of the nondemocratic regime is also intermixed with profound differences about what should actually constitute the "state." Some political activists simultaneously challenge the old nondemocratic regime and the existing territorial state itself. A "stateness" problem may be said to exist when a significant proportion of the population does not accept the boundaries of the territorial state (whether constituted democratically or not) as a legitimate political unit to which they owe obedience.

The new literature on democratic transitions did not give much thought or attention to this stateness problem, because most of it focused on transitions in Southern Europe and Latin America, where the challenge of competing nationalisms within one territorial state was on the whole not a salient issue.[1] Even the competing Catalán and Basque nationalisms in Spain barely entered the theoretical literature, possibly because the legitimacy of Spanish stateness was managed with reasonable success.

The neglect in the literature of the question of the legitimacy of the state is unfortunate because this variable, while not always of great importance for nondemocratic polities, is of fundamental theoretical and political importance for democracy.[2] In fact, agreements about

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stateness are *prior* to agreements about democracy. Such agreements are not necessarily prior for a nondemocratic system. A nondemocratic system may be able to impose acquiescence over large groups of people for long periods of time without threatening the coherence of the state. In a nondemocratic system, the fact that central authority is not derived and maintained by free electoral competition means that separatist or irredentist aspirations, if they exist, are not routinely appealed to in the course of normal politics and can be suppressed. In sharp contrast, the very definition of a democracy involves agreement by the citizens of a territory, however specified, on the procedures to generate a government that can make legitimate claims on their obedience. Therefore, if a significant group of people does not accept claims on its obedience as legitimate, because the people do not want to be a part of this political unit, however constituted or reconstituted, this presents a serious problem for democratic transition and even more serious problems for democratic consolidation.[3]

The degree to which inhabitants accept the domain and scope of a territorial unit as an appropriate entity to make legitimate decisions about its possible future restructuring is thus a key variable for democratic theory. The hypothesis that derives from this therefore is: the greater the percentage of people in a given territory who feel that they do not want to be members of that territorial unit, however it may be reconstituted, the more difficult it will be to consolidate a single democracy within that unit.

Note that we do not consider that "feelings" about territorial appropriateness are immutable. Rather, we believe that such feelings are to a significant extent socially and politically constructed. Elements of the social and political process itself—such as the way in which the fears of minorities are, or are not, addressed can be crucial. Indeed, our thesis is that the sequence of elections, *per se*, can help construct or dissolve identities. For example, in multinational polities, if all-union elections are held first, there are strong incentives for political activists to create all-union parties, and an all-union agenda. Winners of such all-union elections will have enhanced all-union legitimacy, or at least enhanced legitimacy as a body that can make binding decisions about the future of the union. In contrast, if in multinational polities the first elections are regional, we believe that there will be strong incentives for political contestation to focus on

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antistate ethnic issues and that the day after the regional elections the legitimacy of the state will be weaker.

We also do not believe that democratic theory should, implicitly or explicitly, have a strong commitment to territorial largeness or territorial integrity in themselves. Democratic theory and democratic practice should have some space for peaceful negotiated secession. The problem we are addressing here is: what are the chances that a given territorial unit can build a single consolidated democracy within that unit, and if it cannot, what are the chances that negotiated secession will be peaceful and not further complicate the building of democracies in the successor states?

While we treat the theme of stateness in much greater detail elsewhere, in this brief essay we will simply explore how the sequence of elections in itself can play an important role in transforming identities and helping integrate or disintegrate states, especially in highly heterogeneous multinational or multicultural polities.[4]

DEMOCRATIZATION, "ALL-UNION" ELECTIONS, AND STATE-INTEGRATING POLITICS: SPAIN

It is now becoming fashionable to see the Spanish consolidation as being almost overdetermined due to its supportive socioeconomic and geopolitical context. We believe that such an unexamined opinion not only leads to a serious misinterpretation of the actual process of democratic consolidation in Spain, but contributes to the dangerous lack of theoretical attention to relationships between democratic transition, stateness, and electoral sequence. Spain began the process of democratization with the potential for a dangerous stateness problem. The most important indicator of this danger is that while not one army officer was killed during the Basque insurgency in 1968–1975 under Franco, or in the 1975–1977 transition period, in the postelectoral period of democratic rule between 1978 and 1983, thirty-seven army officers died due to Basque nationalist violence.[5] Surprisingly, despite the deaths of military officers and the inevitable difficulties of creating Spain's quasi-federal state, *none* of the important unionwide interest groups or parties engaged in *system blame*. Adversity was not deliberately used either to delegitimate the fledgling democratic regime or the new constitutional structures that departed from Spain's traditional uni-

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tary state organization. In our judgment much of the reason for this lack of system blame was due to Spain's all-union elections.

Elections, especially "founding elections," help create agendas, actors, organizations, and most importantly, legitimacy and power. One of our major arguments is that if a country has a stateness problem, it makes a critical difference whether the first elections are unionwide or regional. In Spain the first elections were unionwide. We believe that they helped transcend Spain's stateness problem. The first post-Franco vote was a referendum to approve a "law *for* political reform," a law that received 94.2 percent approval.[6] This law committed the government not to any details of political reform, but to a process of clear *democratization*, not just *liberalization*.[7]

The second key vote, June 15, 1977, was also not merely about liberalization but about democratization; it was a unionwide general election to select deputies who would create a government and draft the new constitution. Because of the statewide stakes involved, four unionwide parties conducted a unionwide campaign around unionwide themes, winning 319 of the 350 seats.[8] Just as importantly, the statewide parties campaigned very hard in areas where the potential for secession was greatest and the history of antisystem sentiment was most deeply rooted—the Catalán and Basque regions. While strong Catalán and Basque nationalist parties did emerge, the four unionwide parties and their regional affiliates won 67.7 percent of the vote in Catalonia, and 51.4 percent of the vote in the Basque Country.[9]

The deputies and government produced by this statewide election engaged in prolonged public and private negotiations over the constitution and over how to proceed on the stateness issue. A consensual constitution was finally supported in Parliament by the four major parties and the major Catalán nationalist party; 258 of the 274 members voting gave it their approval. Spain's third unionwide vote then followed, namely a referendum on the constitution, which was approved by 87.8 percent of the voters on December 6, 1978. In Catalonia the constitution was approved by 90.4 percent of the voters. In the Basque Country 68.8 percent of those who voted approved the constitution, but voter turnout was only 45.5 percent, which was below the Spanish and Catalán level of 67 percent.

Strengthened and legitimated by these three elections, the unionwide government and Parliament began negotiations in earnest over the devolution of power with the provisional Catalán and Basque

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authorities created after the first all-union legislative elections in 1977. Surrounded by intense controversy, the negotiators eventually crafted a system by which Spain would change its historically centralized state structure for a new decentralized one characterized by an unprecedented devolution of power to the peripheral nationalist constituencies. These negotiated agreements over regional autonomy (the Statutes of Autonomy) were submitted to Basque and Catalán voters in October, 1979. The Catalán statute was approved by 87.9 percent and the Basque statute by 90.3 percent of those who voted in the regions.[10] The largest and oldest Basque nationalist party (the PNV), which had urged a boycott of the constitution, adjusted to the new political situation and urged approval of the Statute of Autonomy.[11]

We believe that if the first elections in Spain had been regional, rather than unionwide, the incentives for the creation of all-union parties and an all-union agenda would have been greatly reduced. Consequently, the statewide parties and their affiliates would have received fewer votes.[12] We also believe that if the first elections had been on the regional level, ethnic issues would have assumed a much more substantial and divisive role in the electoral campaign than they actually did, and that the nationalist parties and their affiliates would have been more extreme. Strengthened nationalist parties would have gravely complicated the stateness problem in Spain. Relations between the military and the democratizing forces of the central government would almost certainly have been put under greater strain. In a context of heightened stateness conflict, the coup coalition—defeated by the king's personal intervention on February 23, 1982—would probably have emerged earlier, with greater force against a divided and less legitimate government, and might well have triumphed. The democratic transition in Spain certainly began under favorable conditions, but the clear commitment to democratization and unionwide elections strengthened the legitimacy claims of the central government, helped forge links between political society and civil society, and contributed to a new constitutionally sanctioned relationship between Spain's peripheral nationalisms and the central government.

Most importantly, all-union elections restructured stateness identities in ways that were supportive of multiple identities and democracy in Spain. In the new democratic Spain *complementary multiple identities* have emerged. We can see this most clearly in the case of Catalonia. Catalans are now more content with their status as

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Catalans in that they now have political and cultural control over education, television and radio, and indeed over most of the areas where Catalán nationalism had been most repressed in the past. Catalans also participate as a "supranational" regional group in the European Community, a body which in some important respects is a "community of regions" as much as a "community of states." Finally, in this new context, Catalans to a greater extent than ever before accept their identity as members of the Spanish state. The overwhelming percentage of all Catalans are "proud" to be "Catalán," "proud" to be "Spanish," and very supportive of joining an integrated European political community. The sequence of elections in Spain helped constitute these mutually supportive legal and affective memberships in substate ("Catalán"), state ("Spanish"), and suprastate ("European Community") polities. *Figure 1* shows these complementary multiple identities very clearly.

FIGURE 1. National Identities in Catalonia

	Catalans	All Spain
"Proud to be Spanish"	73%	85%
"Proud to be Catalan"	82%	NA
In favor of the unification of Europe via the European Community	83%	76%

Source: The statistics on pride were compiled from Francisco Andrés Orizo and Alejandro Sánchez Fernández, *El Sistema de Valors dels Catalans* (Barcelona: Institut Catalá d' Estudis Mediterranis, 1991), p. 207.

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The Basque Country presents a more complex political picture. There is still routine Basque separatist violence, but we believe the overall political situation has been ameliorated by the sequence of elections we have described. Indeed, the Basque Country is a particularly dramatic example of how elections can structure identities and delegitimate certain types of antistate violence.

While the support for membership in a unified Europe is high, the citizens in the Basque Country are 40 percent less "proud" to be

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Spanish than the national average, and about 30 percent less "proud" to be Spanish than the Catalans. See *Figure 2*.

Let us now focus explicitly on the question of how identities can be constructed by political processes. Between 1977 and 1979 the most heated question in Spanish politics concerned the relationship of peripheral nationalisms to the unitary Spanish state. In this two-year period the percentage of the population in the Basque Country who said they wanted to be independent *doubled*, to represent virtually a third of the entire population. Starting from a smaller base, proindependent sentiment *tripled* in Catalonia in the same period. Obviously, if these trends had continued for a few more years there would have been a severe crisis of stateness in Spain. However, once there had been a referendum on the Statutes of Autonomy, and governments had been established with Basque and Catalán nationalist parties in office, sentiment for independence began to decline. See *Figure 3*.

FIGURE 2. National Identities in the Basque Country

	Basque Country	All Spain
"Proud to be Spanish"	44%	85%
"Proud to be Basque"	69%	NA
In favor of the unification of Europe via the European Community	74%	76%

Source: Same as Figure 1.

Assassinations, kidnapping, and terrorism by proindependence groups in the Basque Country still continued after the referendum, but their political significance changed dramatically. In 1979, before the referendum, only 5 percent of the Basque population who were polled labeled terrorists "common criminals" and only 8 percent called them "deranged." However, three years after the referendum the general population assigned much more pejorative identities to terrorists, and by so doing began to marginalize them politically; 29 percent now called them "criminals," and 29 percent said they were "deranged." Most importantly, the same "identity delegitimation" occurred among those who were voters for the largest Basque

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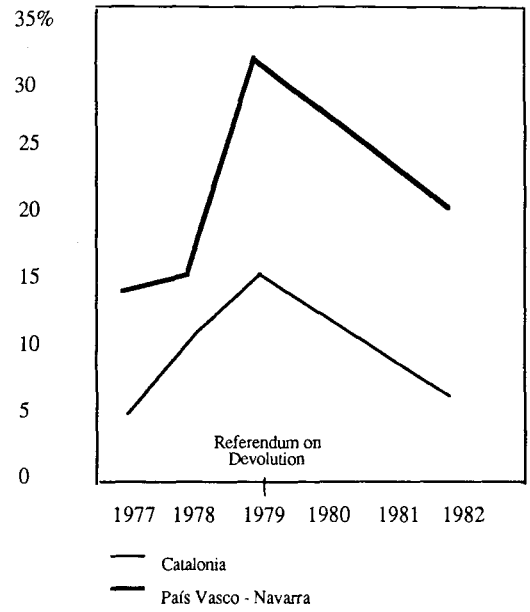
FIGURE 3. Percentage of the Population Wanting Independence in Catalonia and País Vasco-Navarra Before and After the 1979 Referendum on Devolution of Power to the Autonomías



Source: Juan J. Linz, "De la crisis de un Estado unitario al Estado de las autonomías," in Fernando Fernández Rodríguez, *La España de las Autonomías* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios de Administración Local, 1985), p. 587.

nationalist party (the PNV). In 1979 only 6 percent of PNV supporters said terrorists were "criminals" and only 12 percent said they were "deranged." In 1983 the percentages were 27 percent and 30 percent respectively.[14] Although political killings continue in the Basque Country, they no longer threaten to bring down the democratic government. The crisis of Spanish stateness has been contained, largely because of the choice of electoral sequence.

LIBERALIZATION, REGIONAL ELECTIONS, AND STATE-DISINTEGRATING POLITICS: THE SOVIET UNION AND YUGOSLAVIA

Even with extremely skillful handling, the stateness problem in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia would have been much more difficult

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than in Spain.[15] This said, the actual policies followed in both countries were virtually the *optimal* sequence to be followed *if* one wanted to disintegrate the state and heighten ethnic conflict.[16] The contrast with Spain is illustrative.

The first important point to stress is that in neither the Soviet Union nor Yugoslavia was there ever a clear commitment to *democratization* as we have defined the term. Certainly in the Soviet Union, *perestroika*, and especially *glasnost*, had strong liberalizing dimensions. In the Soviet Union liberalization contributed to democratizing pressures from below, but in neither the Soviet Union nor Yugoslavia was there ever a commitment by central authorities to submit all-union power to democratization.

In both countries elections were allowed, but in both countries the most democratic and contested elections were for regional power. The point is clearest in Yugoslavia, where competitive all-union elections were simply never held in the post–World War II period. Republic elections were held in Yugoslavia in the summer and fall of 1990 and, not surprisingly, ethnic issues became of paramount concern. The situation in the Soviet Union is somewhat more complicated. The first elections in the Soviet Union were indeed all-union elections for the Congress of Peoples' Deputies in March 1989. However, these elections had many limitations. They were not multiparty, so democratic political society in the real sense could not develop. Also one-third of the seats in the 2,250 member Congress of Peoples' Deputies were set aside for the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations and did not face popular ratification. Furthermore, the nomination process allowed many Communist Party–dominated local electoral commissions to pack meetings with their supporters and thus control the nominating process. In many districts, all the candidates to emerge from the local electoral commissions were Communist Party supporters. Indeed, in one-quarter of the contests only a single candidate emerged from the local electoral commission. In this context many opposition candidates fell by the wayside.

The highly selective 2,250-member Congress of Peoples' Deputies that emerged from this process became the electoral college for indirect election to the Supreme Soviet. This indirect method of selection further weakened the electoral credibility of the upper—and more powerful—house and produced numerous inequities. For example, Boris Yeltsin won his seat in Moscow with 89 percent of the

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popular vote, but was initially denied a seat in the Supreme Soviet until one member offered to step down in his favor. Other less prominent deputies were not so lucky. Thus, though the first elections in the Soviet Union *were* all-union, the proposition holds: the most important and contested elections in both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia were not at the all-union, but at the republic, level.

Cognizant of the shortcomings of the all-union electoral law, republic parliaments drafted legislation that avoided many of the practices which had helped to discredit the all-union parliament. Election rules varied somewhat across republics, but in general they allowed republic-level actors to make a greater claim to legitimacy than their all-union counterparts. Each republic discarded guaranteed seats for the Communist Party and Communist Party–dominated public organizations. Voters in most republics, the major exception being Russia, elected deputies directly to the upper house of parliament. Inequities did occur in elections to republic parliaments, especially in Central Asia, and in the area of the rights of ethnic minorities. Yet, on the whole, deputies from republic Supreme Soviets could not only claim to be the defenders of ethnic interests; they could also make a stronger claim to legitimacy than USSR Supreme Soviet deputies.

Before analyzing these elections, let us say a word about the post-totalitarian regime type.[17] A key aspect of a totalitarian regime is that independent preexisting parties and labor, business, and religious organizations have been subject to extensive campaigns of elimination or subjugation. Even in the most mature post-totalitarian regime, independent parties are not allowed space to compete for control of the government, because the Communist Party is officially accorded the "leading role" in the Communist Party–state. The landscape of civil society is very flat. All-union independent organizations are virtually nonexistent. In all post-totalitarian polities the relative flatness of the landscape of civil society has created problems for politicians, because it is hard to represent amorphous groups. Even after liberalization the articulation of interests based on wealth, ideology, or property relations has been strikingly less than we find in many authoritarian regimes.[18] However, politicians are specialists in mobilizing hopes and grievances. In the context of post-totalitarianism's flattened landscape the easiest hopes and grievances for politicians to mobilize relate to ethnicity. The region's two most

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multinational states—the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia—predictably were the sites of the most extreme manifestation of this general phenomenon.

We have said that elections can create agendas, can create actors, can reconstruct identities, help legitimate and delegitimate claims to obedience, and create power. The regional elections in the USSR and Yugoslavia did all these things. In Spain the process set in motion by all-union general elections reconstituted stateness on even firmer grounds. The regional elections in the USSR and Yugoslavia did the opposite. The following series of quotes from reports written by teams of electoral observers associated with the Helsinki Commission capture the extent to which the process of republic electoral campaigns—in the context of the Soviet multinational state, which had never submitted itself to an all-union election—contributed to the disintegration of the state:

Moldavia (Election: February 25, 1990)

> The election campaign pointed up the necessity for every movement vying for power in the republic to develop a program for sovereignty, the minimum demand in Moldavia. . . .Whether Moscow has to deal directly with a Popular-Front dominated Moldavian Supreme Soviet, or work through Party First Secretary Lucinski is irrelevant, for it will be faced almost immediately with a demand to make good on the republic's demand for sovereignty.[19]

Ukraine (Election: March 18, 1990)

> The Democratic Bloc of opposition groups, formed to contest the election, successfully focused the campaign on voters' concerns, inducing the Communist Party candidates often to follow suit. High on voters' lists were greater political autonomy, national and cultural issues. . . .[20]

> Increasing demands for the use of the Ukrainian language resulted in an important Ukrainian SSR Supreme Soviet decree stipulating that as of January 1, 1990, Ukrainian is the state language of the republic, while Russian is to be used for communication between nationality groups. . . . Long suppressed national feelings are now sweeping [through] the Ukrainian population. . . .[21]

> It is likely that there will be even greater progress for Ukrainian self-determination leading to independence.[22]

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Georgia (Election: October 28, 1990)

> By election day, all contending parties—including the Georgian Communist Party—advocated independence.[23]

> In an effort to shore up its nationalist credentials, the Georgian Communist Party platform demands guarantees for Georgia's territorial integrity, the introduction of Georgian citizenship. . . proclaiming that Georgian citizens should only perform military service inside the republic.[24]

The nationalist theme of the election not only exacerbated relations with the center, but nationalist outbidding in Georgia, as in many other republics, worsened relations with minority groups in the republics and eroded a core component of future democratization—full citizenship rights for all inhabitants regardless of ethnicity. The election observer team noted that in Georgia:

> The eventual winner, Gamsakhurdia, made many statements that have alarmed non-Georgians. In June 1990, for example, he called mixed marriages "fatal to the Georgian family and the Georgian language". . . .[25]

> Fearing for their national rights in an independent Georgia, some non-Georgian groups have attempted to protect themselves. . . .the Abkhaz Autonomous Republic and the Southern Ossetian Autonomous Oblast declared sovereignty in August and September, 1990, respectively. . . . [26]

The result of the regional elections in the USSR and Yugoslavia, in the absence of prior freely contested all-union democratic elections, contributed to five interrelated and compounding state-disintegrating dynamics.

First, virtually the day after the regional elections, the statewide legitimacy of the central government was damaged because the nationalist regional forces could make a stronger claim to democratic legitimacy via elections.[27]

Second, in no republic in the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia did a new unionwide political organization emerge from the elections that was in any sense a counterweight to local nationalism.

Third, in the process of the elections, political identities in the USSR and in Yugoslavia became more narrow, compounding, exclusive, and unsupportive of participation in a potentially all-union

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democratic entity. In Spain during and after the electoral processes political identities had become more multiple, cross cutting, inclusive, and supportive of participation in a reconstituted Spanish democratic state.

Fourth, in many republics such as Georgia, Azerbaijan, Serbia, and Croatia the prospect of ethnic warfare has led presidents to repress dissenting voices within their core ethnic groups and to show greater intolerance toward minority groups.

Fifth, the crisis of stateness and the resulting crises of governability blocked the formulation and implementation of economic policy. The cataclysmic political collapse of any central or coordinating authority preceded and created the economic crisis, not vice-versa.[28]

Let us conclude our discussion of the consequences of electoral sequence with the prophetic words of a Soviet social scientist writing before the coup and well before the de jure disintegration of the Soviet state. He captured the degree to which the regional elections had already contributed to de facto state disintegration:

> Local elections contributed to the process of the shift of rhetoric of nationalist movements from "civic" to "ethnic". . . .The "war of laws" and "parade of sovereignties" followed inevitably after republic and local elections. . . . The crisis of power in the center of the Union and the process of ungovernability increased enormously.[29]

ENDNOTES

[1]For example, the most influential study of democratic transitions is the four-volume work edited by Guillermo O'Donnell, Phillipe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions From Authoritarian Rule* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), which is devoted entirely to Southern Europe and Latin America and contains virtually no discussion of "stateness" problems.

[2]In fact possibly as much as a third of the countries past and present, where democratization has been on the agenda, have had to grapple with some form of the stateness problem. Some of the major categories of the stateness problem are: (1)"Divided states," where democracy was, or is, made more difficult due to security claims, e.g., Taiwan and South Korea; (2) "Nonsovereign states," where democracy is precluded because the community does not have control over its sovereignty and the community will be transferred to a larger polity, e.g., Hong Kong; (3) "States which want to join other states and are precluded by the international system from doing so," e.g., Austria after World War I, which wanted to join Germany; (4) "Irredentist polities," which are subject to violence by groups who want to unite all their ethnic community outside their existing

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boundary into their state, e.g., the interwar Bulgarian conflicts over Macedonian irredentism, and the Sudetan problem in Czechoslovakia in the 1930s; (5) "Wealthy minority ethnic groups" who want to secede, e.g., the Biafran Civil War in Nigeria; (6) "Poorer ethnic regions" which want to secede, because they believe their rights and economy will be improved in an independent state, e.g., Bangladesh and possibly Slovakia. Many more categories could be added to the list of stateness problems.

[3]The classic statement of this problem is by Robert A. Dahl: "We cannot solve the problem of the proper scope and domain of democratic units from within democratic theory. Like the majority principle, the democratic process presupposes a proper unit. *The criteria of the democratic process presuppose the rightfulness of the unit itself.*" See his *Democracy and its Critics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 207. Emphasis in the original. After a visit to the Soviet Union, Dahl amplified his thoughts on this theme in "Democracy, Majority Rule, and Gorbachev's Referendum," *Dissent* (Fall 1991): 491–96. We do not believe that Dahl's important observation would mean that stateness problems are always unsolvable. Rather, complex negotiations, pacts, and possibly territorial realignments and consociational agreements are often necessary before the majority formula will be accepted as legitimately binding. As Dahl argues, simple insistence on the majority formula *per se* will not do until the appropriateness of the unit is established.

[4]"Stateness" is one of the eight key variables we explore in a book we are completing, entitled *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and Latin America*. Many of the definitions and assertions we make in this essay are developed and documented in much greater detail in that book. While in this essay we will consider only the historical cases of Spain, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union, we believe that our argument about electoral sequence has strong theoretical and political implications for other heterogeneous countries that have not started efforts to democratize. Indonesia is a strong case in point. Indonesia, for example, with its multiethnic, multicultural, and multi-island composition, should be wary of any process of democratization that does not create a fully democratic center as a first step.

[5]Ricardo García Damborenea, *La Encruicijada Vasca* (Barcelona: Editorial Argos Vergara, 1984), 52.

[6]On the "Law *for* Political Reform" see Pablo Lucas Verdú, *La Octava Ley Fundamental*, with a foreward by Enrique Tierno (Madrid: Tecnos, 1976), and Antonio Hernández Gil, *El cambio político español y la Constitución* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1981).

[7]Analysts and activists alike must be aware of the difference between *liberalization* and *democratization*. In a nondemocratic setting, "liberalization" may entail a mix of policy and social changes, such as less censorship of the media, somewhat greater space for the organization of autonomous working-class activities, the introduction of some legal safeguards such as habeas corpus, the releasing of most political prisoners, the return of political exiles, possibly measures for improving the distribution of income, and, most important, the toleration of political opposition.

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"Democratization" entails liberalization but is a wider and more specifically political concept. Democratization requires open contestation for the right to win control of the government, and this in turn absolutely requires free statewide elections, the results of which determine who governs. With the use of these definitions, it is clear there can be liberalization without democratization. Liberalization refers fundamentally to civil society. Democratization involves civil society, but it refers fundamentally to political society. Democratic transitions clearly relate to democratization, not merely liberalization.

[8]For the organization and development of statewide parties, and the importance of the general election in transforming the agendas of these parties, see Richard Gunther, Giacomo Sani, and Goldie Shabad, *Spain After Franco: The Making of a Competitive Party System* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 37–177. The results of the 1977 election are found on page 38.

[9] Ibid., 311.

[10]See Juan J. Linz, "De la crisis de un Estado unitario al Estado de las Autonomías," in Fernando Fernández Rodríguez, *La España de las Autonomías* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios de Administración Local, 1985), 527–672, and Juan J. Linz *Conflicto en Euskadi* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1986). On the negotiation of the Basque Statute of Autonomy, see the account by two journalists, Kepa Bordegarai and Robert Pastor, *Estatuto Vasco* (San Sebastian: Ediciones Vascas, 1979), passim.

[11]Some extreme separatist groups continued to boycott the vote on autonomy, and the overall voter turnout was 13 percent lower than the Spanish average on the constitutional reform; nevertheless, the voter turnout of 54 percent was still politically significant.

[12]Even when stateness issues are not salient, regional parties in Spain tend to poll 15–25 percent better in regional elections than they do in all-union elections.

[13]The questions on pride are from Francisco Andrés Orizo and Alejandro Sánchez Fernández, *El Sistema de Valors dels Catalans* (Barcelona: Insitut Catalá d'Estudis Mediterranis, 1991), 207. The question on European unification is from *Los Españoles ante el Segundo aniversario de la firma del Tratado de Adhesión de España a la Comunidad Europea* (Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, April 1988), 53.

[14]Juan J. Linz, *Conflicto en Euskadi*, 698.

[15]We believe that the problem of the Baltic countries—due to the compounding resentments stemming from their previous status as independent states, their recent and forceful absorption into the USSR, their comparatively greater wealth, and their religious and linguistic differences—was insolvable. It could possibly have been better handled by Gorbachev making an announcement that he recognized the illegitimacy of the secret pact between Hitler and Stalin and holding a referendum on the fiftieth anniversary of that pact which asked the population of the Baltic countries whether they wanted to join the Soviet Union voluntarily. Had they voted not to join the Soviet Union (as they probably would have), a peaceful and rapid split might have been arranged with full citizenship rights for all.

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[16]The case of electoral sequence in Czechoslovakia also merits attention. Federal and republic elections were held on the same day in Czechoslovakia, so the direct effect of electoral sequence is difficult to discern. However, most ideological and organizational activity was at the republic, rather than the all-union, level. Indeed, of the eleven parties that gained seats in the all-union parliament, only one, the former Czechoslovak Communist Party, had representatives from both republics. The Czechoslovak "founding election" paid almost no ideological or organizational attention to the formation of all-union parties.

[17]The question of the implications of prior regime type for the *paths* of democratic transition, and the *tasks* of democratic consolidation, is treated in detail in Chapter 1 of our forthcoming book *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and Latin America.*

[18]For example, when East Europeans were asked "Your country has many problems to solve. Of those conflicts listed on this card, tell me, please, which do you consider very important, somewhat important, of little importance or not at all important," the most commonly articulated conflict involved nationalism. "Conflicts between nationalists and the rest of the country" were mentioned as "very important" by 50 percent in the Ukraine, 39 percent in Czechoslovakia, 29 percent in Estonia, and 27 percent in Lithuania. In contrast, problems between "those with money and those without" were mentioned as very important by only 36, 25, 23, and 24 percent of respondents respectively. See László Bruszt and János Simon, *Political Culture: Political and Economical Orientations in Central and Eastern Europe During the Transition to Democracy, 1990–91, The Codebook* (Budapest: Erasmus Foundation, December, 1991), 37–39.

[19]*Elections in the Baltic States and the Soviet Republics*, compiled by the staff of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Washington, D.C., December 1990), 89.

[20]Ibid., 115.

[21]Ibid., 119.

[22]Ibid., 135.

[23]Ibid., 165.

[24]Ibid., 170.

[25]Ibid., 169.

[26]Ibid., 165–66.

[27]An important indicator of the erosion of stateness is the sharp drop in citizens who answered the unionwide military draft. By the end of the 1990 draft, quota fulfillment in Latvia was 39.5 percent, in Lithuania 35.9 percent, in Armenia 22.5 percent, and in Georgia 18.5 percent. By mid-1991, these figures had declined to 30.8 percent for Latvia, 12.4 percent for Lithuania, 16.4 percent for Armenia, and 8.2 percent for Georgia. Most importantly, by mid-1991 Moscow itself had only fulfilled half its quota for this six-month period. See Stephen Foye, "Student Deferments and Military Manpower Shortages," *Report on the USSR* (August 2, 1991), 5–8.

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[28]The "state" in the Weberian sense (as the collapse of the all-union draft shows) had disintegrated in the Soviet Union even before the failed coup attempt of August 1991, a coup whose trigger was the desperate effort of some elements within the all-union forces of the Party, the KGB, and the military to block the implementation of the 9+1 Treaty which would have given a de jure status to the de facto fragmentation.

[29]Andranik Migranian, "The End of Perestroika's Romantic Stage," unpublished paper, Moscow, July 1991, 7.

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Nations are formed and are kept alive by the fact that they have a program for tomorrow.

From "Invertebrate Spain," 1922

A revolution only lasts fifteen years, a period which coincides with the effectiveness of a generation.

From "The Revolt of the Masses," 1930

The masses feel that it is easy to flee from reality when it is the most difficult thing in the world.

From "The Dehumanization of Art," 1948

Jose Ortega y Gasset
Selections from his writings

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Ivo Banac

The Fearful Asymmetry of War: The Causes and Consequences of Yugoslavia's Demise

For whereas wickedness is fearful, it beareth witness of its condemnation: for a troubled conscience always forecasteth grievous things.

For fear is nothing else but a yielding up of the succours from thought.

And while there is less expectation from within, the greater doth it count the ignorance of that cause which bringeth the torment.

—*Wisdom, 17: 10–12.*

La civilisation est une école du courage; elle se mesure aux résultats de l'effort que l'homme fait pour vaincre ses craintes chimériques, et pour connaître les vrais dangers qui le menacent. Progrès est tout ce qui sera à l'homme ou qui l'aide à vaincre les peurs imaginaires, à découvrir et à éliminer les vrais dangers. La civilisation est le résultat du progrès entendu de cette manière.

—*Guglielmo Ferrero (1941)*

FERRERO FINISHED HIS BOOK ON POWER in Swiss exile, far away from his Tuscan L'Ulivello, at the beginning of the third year of the penultimate European war. He had it published in New York "à cause des censures qui s'y sont multipliées."[1] The Yugoslav war, which to date has been waged only briefly in Slovenia, in June 1991, and ever since then with vengeance in Croatia, might not yet

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seem to be a worthy successor to the European war of 1939–1945, but it bears all the earmarks of earlier—and seeds of future—European and global conflicts. This is to say that in this war, as in those that prefigured it at the time of the Ottoman and Habsburg collapse, local differences escalated at moments of vast systemic breakdowns. Brittle hierarchies collapsed under the weight of ideological debris. Nations sought liberation and the redress of old wrongs. The shells of old states that had lain at the bottom of imperial oceans for decades or centuries reemerged and were reforged into shape by blows of battle, in the same graving docks, moreover, as the new ships of state. At the same time, the majority of intellectually lazy and temperamentally haughty statesmen of the Great Powers (to return to nineteenth-century terminology) tended to belittle the warnings and the distress of local conflicts. This is not because they were ill informed, but because they were manageable wax that acknowledges the flame of power and fear—the power of old privilege and the fear of uncertainty.

The task of assessing the causes—and perhaps even the consequences—of the war that has destroyed Yugoslavia has become a scholarly wager of battle. Different from the time of Ferrero, censorship is increasing only slowly in our academic Switzerland. What is more noticeable is the audacity of the grand simplifiers. Hoary legends are resurrected and new ones launched. Media impresarios select the *enragés* for their staged Serbo-Croat gladiatorial combats. The winning thesis speaks to the irascible hatred that governs the Balkan savages. Otherwise perfectly respectable journals print such revelations as the following:

> Tudjman, Milošević, and everyone else in Yugoslavia are victims of history. For centuries their forebears lived in a state of poverty and illiteracy, where rumor filled the vacuum created by the absence of books and documentation. Then came four-and-a-half decades of Communist totalitarianism, when many, many books were published—all containing lies. The Serb-Croat war in Yugoslavia is the upshot of a few million minds, all collectively disoriented, and all finally granted free expression.[2]

Those who are destined to command are fearful of those who are destined to obey; in Ferrero's terms, Cain fears Abel. The Atlanticist unease with self-determination that has attended the revolution in the

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dead world of socialism is part of the fearful asymmetry of our times. The Left fears the revolutionary patrimony of Mazzini and Garibaldi. The Right proclaims that only fools rejoice when great empires fall. "The symmetry prefigured by Alexis de Tocqueville of a world divided between America and Russia is over."[3] Much the same seems to obtain for small empires like Yugoslavia. Perhaps Ferrero was right when he saw cupidity and ambition as the consequence of war, whereas fear was at the cosmic origin of war.[4]

One of the burdens in writing about the South Slavs is the onerous necessity of telling the story from the beginning. The knowledge of South Slavic affairs is indeed limited in the West, as is evident from virtually all historical references in the media, including the highbrow press. For the sake of brevity this much should be noted: the current conflict among the South Slavs, specifically between the Serbs and the Croats, is not ancient, unless the term *ancient* encompasses the end of the nineteenth century, and it is not religious, although religion has played a part in the encounter. The current conflict is primarily ideological and political.[5] In order to understand it one must begin with the continuity of individual South Slavic national elites and states (where they existed), with special emphasis on national and political ideologies, not with "modernization" studies and research of social structures. Serbia is particularly important from this point of view. With the fall of the medieval Serbian state to the Ottoman Turks—the process that commenced in 1389 with the Serbian defeat at the Battle of Kosovo and ended in 1459 with the abolition of the vassal Serbian despotate—the Serbs lost not only their independence, but also their native landed elites. National leadership passed into the hands of the autocephalous Serbian Orthodox patriarchate (1557–1766), whose prelates substituted not only for the gentry, but for its tasks in national culture and historical memory. Hence, the Serbian uprisings against the Turks (1804, 1815) were by definition both confessional and national, which translated into a lasting suspicion of religious and national diversity. The uprisings created the framework for the growth of the Serbian state, which continued expanding southward toward southern Serbia, Kosovo, and Macedonia in three waves (1831–1833, 1878, 1912–1913), thereby setting the model for Serbian—indeed South Slavic—unification. They were also social, and brought about an economy of peasant smallholders, intolerant of class differences.

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The Serbian linguistic and cultural reforms of the early nineteenth century created new difficulties. Vuk Karadžić (1787–1864), the principal Serbian language reformer and national ideologist, contributed to the secularization of Serbian nationhood, but in a peculiar way. He increasingly defined the Serbs by a "scientific" criterion—their use of the central South Slavic dialect (štokavian), not by adherence to Orthodoxy. Karadžić's ideology of "linguistic" nationhood is at the source of new Serbian belief that all štokavian speakers—among them the vast majority of Catholic Croats and all Bosnian Muslims—were really Serbs, and therefore the most natural targets for assimilation. The new secularized national ideology, not religion, created the grounds for permanent clashes between the Serbs and their western neighbors. But since assimilation and expansion ultimately could not succeed in creating Serbs where they did not exist, Serbia's vast empire-building projects—first in independent Serbia (1878–1918) and then in Serbian-dominated Yugoslavia—became the source of growing frustration, failure, and fear. Ferrero cited Levy Bruhl's reference to African natives not fearing to bathe in crocodile-infested waters since they consider crocodiles harmless. A crocodile's occasional attack or harm to a swimmer is attributed exclusively to hostile spells: "L'homme n'a aucune peur de l'animal, qui est réel et vivant, il a peur du sorcier, que son imagination a créé."[6]

In his collection of Serbian proverbs (1836) Karadžić included the saying "Fear tends the goats," to which he added the following exegetic comment: "He who fears the master does the work, for there is nothing without *fear*."[7] And indeed, the current policies of official Serbia, especially those that Slobodan Milošević permitted, fostered, and championed after he became the head of the ruling League of Communists of Serbia (SKS) in May 1986, cannot be understood without a visit to a gallery of modern Serbian fears.[8] Our evidence will come from the brilliantly acerbic caricatures of Milenko Mihajlović, whose inflammatory contributions are a regular feature of Belgrade's *Književne novine* (Literary Gazette), the organ of the official Association of Serbian Writers. It should be noted that four out of five of Mihajlović's illustrations were published before the multiparty elections in Slovenia and Croatia (April–May 1990), and all before the earliest hostilities in Croatia.

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The first picture (see *Figure 1*) from May 1989 shows the toothy Tito, wearing the marshal's cap and epaulets, surrounded by dozens of equally toothy Albanian children, all wearing typical Albanian white skullcaps and pioneers' kerchiefs.[9] The *mise en scène* is replete with menace. The toothy little critters are Tito's pioneers. He is their master. They pay obeisance to him, but behind his back, they are already making signs of disrespect. Though the old deceiver has been out of the picture for almost a decade, they continue breeding and, unless something is done, they will eat *us* alive. The visual anthology of Albanian menace is portrayed as an aspect of Titoism.

The argument was not entirely new. During the war Tito's support was weakest in Serbia. Despite the communist class approach to the criticism of Serbian "bourgeois" hegemony, Serbians as a group (as opposed to the Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina) saw no advantage in Tito's revolutionary federalism. If anybody, it was the exiled King Petar II and his field commander Draža Mihailović, the leader of the royalist Chetniks, not Tito and the Communist Partisans, who won Serbia's wartime allegiance. Since Serbia was in effect conquered by the Soviet and Yugoslav Partisan divisions in October 1944, Tito had to create a base for himself in the most important Yugoslav republic. His disadvantages were numerous. He dethroned the Serbian dynasty. He delivered a *coup de grâce* to the old Serbian-dominated royalist army—the chief underpinning of the old regime, and had Draža Mihailović executed. He humiliated the Serbian Orthodox Church and the old establishment. He created a federation in which Serbia was ostensibly no more than the first among equals. Moreover, he was himself a Croat. Clearly the unwritten agreement between Tito and Serbia, which permitted regime legitimacy in this key region, implied a backsliding from the denunciations of Serbian-dominated Yugoslavia that typified Tito's militant wartime position.[10] Tito's part of the bargain was to dull the campaign against Serbian predominance through the espousal of centralism and Yugoslav unitarism—the ruling political and ideological antecedents that permitted the revival of Serbian influence.

The bargain held until the early 1960s. The high points were the break with the Soviet Union in 1948, which initiated a search for a reformed communism with Yugoslav colors, and the growing complacency in systemic innovation that characterized the late 1950s. The beginning of the 1960s found Yugoslavia in the dilemma of

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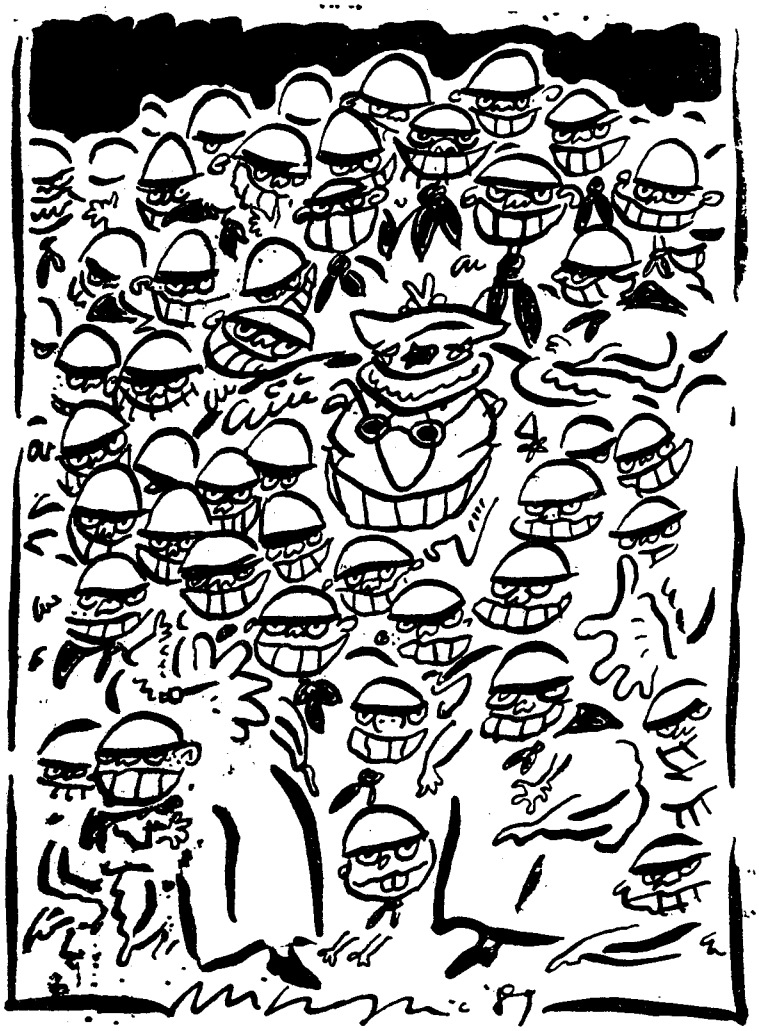

Figure 1.

either maintaining the loosened command system in politics and economics or advancing into a "socialist" market economy through a gradual introduction of "democratic" and "decentralizing" policies. The centralist forces headed by Serbian cadres (chief among them being Aleksandar Ranković, the Party's organizational secre-

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tary, responsible for the security police) were opposed to this "anarchy" of options. This meant that the reformists, who had adherents everywhere, but especially in the industrial republics of Slovenia and Croatia, opened all fronts in their war against centralism, including the sensitive and taboo question of equality among the republics and nationalities. One of the first shots in this war was the Central Committee (CC) letter of March 1959 to all Party organizations, in which the Communists were pointedly reminded that the equality of minorities must be maintained and furthered. The letter alluded to the situation of the Albanian minority, which constituted a regional majority in Kosovo.[11]

The decisive moment in the political evolution of Yugoslavia during the troubled 1960s was the point when Tito joined the reformists. This happened in 1962, at the Sixth Plenum of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (SKJ) CC, when Tito stated that "we have to take decentralization as our point of departure."[12] He increasingly sided with Edvard Kardelj, the leading Slovene Communist and Party theoretician, who connected, in the most explicit way, the problems of economic reform with national equality.[13] Tito became convinced that the maintenance of (predominantly Serbian) centralist dominance, which frequently took the mask of Yugoslavism, increasingly weakened the regime. But despite Tito's effort to bring the Serbian Party organization along to his point of view, in Serbia he encountered silence and obstruction. This led to a clash. At the Fourth Plenum of the SKJ CC (July 1966), which followed the recessionary economic reform of 1965, Tito decided to strike at Ranković's security service—the organizational base of centralist resistance. But the fall of Ranković, in the words of a Serbian Titoist, had already engendered Serbian fears:

> In Belgrade we already had various slogans that were launched by hostile elements. One is, for example, that this is a struggle against Serbian cadres; another, what will now happen with Serbia, who will represent Serbia's interests, etc.[14]

The removal of Ranković and the purge of the security service signaled greater balance in nationality relations. Serbian predominance in the federal agencies was increasingly challenged, as were the strong-arm methods in dealing with the non-Serbs. Croats and Bosnian Muslims gained ground. But the greatest winners were

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Albanians, the excesses of Ranković's police having been especially notable in Kosovo. The province's Albanian majority (77.4 percent of Kosovo's population in 1981) increasingly were empowered. As Serbian fears accordingly swelled, Dobrica Ćosić, a leading Serbian novelist, started criticizing the Party policy. In May 1968, at an SKS plenum, he said that the Party could no longer afford:

> not to know about the widespread belief in Serbia that the relations between Skipetars [Albanians] and Serbs are worsening, that the Serbs and Montenegrins feel threatened, that there are pressures for them to emigrate [from Kosovo], that the Serbs and Montenegrins systematically are being removed from the positions of leadership . . . that the proper scale of chauvinist bent and nationalist psychosis among the members of the Skipetar nationality is not being taken. . . .[15]

Albanian demonstrations of November 1968, where the slogan "Kosovo republic" was first voiced, only increased Serbian fears about the growing Albanian menace.

The same cannot be said of Tito. His confidence in the Kosovar Albanian Party elite continued to grow. He co-opted and marginalized the Belgrade student demonstrators in June 1968, thereby pushing aside the most serious challenge by "progressive" unitarism in his declining years. He encouraged the growing decentralization of the Yugoslav state ("federalizing the federation") and the reaffirmation of Croatia. Despite his clash with the Croatian Party leadership in 1971, he purged, too, the creative Serbian Party leadership of Marko Nikezić and Latinka Perović in 1972. He thereby weakened the Serbian establishment, in which the anticentralist Serbs (Miloš Minić and Mirko Popović) became unusually prominent. The crown of Tito's discrepancy with Serbia was the constitution of 1974, which raised Serbia's autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina to the level of virtual republics while simultaneously introducing a system of absolute parity and proportionality in the relations among the republics and in their participation in the federal organs. The wisdom of this arrangement has been in dispute ever since. The constitution's chief structural weakness—the fact that it was predicated on the permanent rule and unity of the SKJ—became evident only much later.

Serbia's unhappiness with the constitution of 1974 and the upgraded status of the autonomous provinces was noticeable in the late

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1970s. Dragoslav Draža Marković, the president of Serbia, initiated a commission charged with the ways and means of "constituting SR Serbia as a single state and socio-political community." The commission's materials, known as the "Blue Book," were a source of conflict in the Serbian leadership in July 1977, as was Marković's notion that the "equality of all [the constituent parts of Yugoslavia] cannot be realized under conditions of inequality for the Serbs."[16] Nevertheless, the wholesale Serbian campaign against Tito's constitution commenced after Tito's death in 1980. Serbian leaders found their pretext in the massive Albanian demonstrations that shook Kosovo and prompted the use of firearms in March–April 1981. Their calls for the diminution of autonomies could only be accomplished by exaggerating the Albanian menace, and increasingly that of the Vojvodina "autonomists," who were themselves not necessarily members of Hungarian, Croat, Slovak, or Romanian communities, but who were most often indigenous Serbs. This mobilization was innately anti-Albanian, but also anti-Titoist, and anti-Yugoslav. The elite of Serbian intelligentsia lent a hand to this vociferous campaign.

Gojko Djogo's 1981–1982 poetic cycle *Vunena vremena* (Wooly Times), which was banned and contributed to the author's imprisonment, was one of the first direct attacks against the late Tito ("the old rat from Dedinje").[17] There followed bewildered revisionist histories of Vladimir Dedijer, the chief function of which was to remove Tito from the pedestal of infallibility,[18] and the thinly veiled fictions of Dobrica Ćosić, in which Serbian Communists of the prewar period were cast in the role of executors of Comintern's anti-Serbian conspiracies. "How could you," says one of Ćosić's protagonists to a ranking Communist, "how could you, man, follow the orders of the Kremlin and of the cosmopolitan knaves from the Comintern, and proceed to tear down Yugoslavia, your fatherland, for which you made war over a number of years and for which half of your [Serbian] people died? Explain to me, what kind of meningitis seized you . . . and so many Serb Communists that you are thick with the darkest enemies of your people!"[19]

The spiritual center of Serbian intellectual renationalization was the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU). In May 1985, at SANU's annual meeting, members decided to organize a commission for the writing of a memorandum that would express SANU's thinking on the current situation in Yugoslavia. A draft version of

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this memorandum was "blown" in a countercampaign by orthodox Titoists that commenced in September 1986. It was this alternately condemned and glorified draft that has subsequently acquired almost legendary proportions as *The Memorandum of SANU*. Retrospectively, this curious document was a child of self-restraint. Written at a time when political discourse was still *marxisante,* it studiously minced away the whole of Tito's edifice. A summary passage is worth noting:

> The economic reform of 1965 was in essence a change in the basic strategic direction of social development: the project of political democratization was substituted for a project of economic liberalization. The idea of self-management, whose essence is the disalienation of politics, was substituted for the idea of decentralization, which brought about the establishment of regional centers of alienated power. The ethics of solidarity and social justice were substituted for the spirit of possessive individualism and apology of group interest. Political voluntarism, which was daring and dynamic in the first postwar decades, when it could count on the mass support of the people, now became static and determined in the defense of the system, even when it became evident that the system is inconsistent and ineffective.[20]

The fundamental position of the memorandum was that Tito pursued consistent discrimination against the Serbs and Serbia. The reason was his supposed dependence on Comintern's anti-Serbianism ("in the attempts to realize its world wide strategic and tactical conceptions [the Comintern] tended toward the breaking up of Yugoslavia. It found its ideological justification in the confrontation between the 'oppressing' Serb nation and the remaining 'oppressed' nations"). The consequences were the "economic subjugation" of Serbia by Slovenia and Croatia, the "political and economic domination" by the latter, the division of Serbia by the constitution of 1974, its inequality in the federation, the "genocide" against the Serbs in Kosovo ("physical, political, legal, and cultural genocide against the Serb population of Kosovo and Metohia is the severest defeat in the liberation struggles that Serbia led from Orašac [Karadjordje uprising against the Turks] in 1804 to the [Partisan] uprising in 1941"), the decline of Serb presence and cultural autonomy in Croatia ("excepting the [wartime] period, never have the Serbs of Croatia been so imperiled [*ugroženi*] as today"), the growth of Serb

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autonomous centers ("the political leaders of AP Vojvodina are not working in favor of proximity and integration; they seek still greater independence and separation from SR Serbia"), the disintegration of Serb culture along republic lines ("the usurpation and division of Serb cultural heritage goes very far; it is taught in schools that [Montenegrin poet and ruler Petar II Petrović Njegoš is not a Serb writer"), and Serbophobia.[21] Serbia was simply not understood in the rich northwest (Slovenia, Croatia) and the poor southeast (Bosnia-Hercegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia). It was a victim of the "anti-Serb coalition."[22]

The memorandum became public knowledge four months after the Tenth Congress of the SKS, and in some respects the expectations of the document and of the new leadership of the SKS became intertwined. The Serbian Party convened its highest decision-making body in May 1986 in a defiant mood. The decorations behind the congressional dais were dominated not by the ritual portraits of Tito, but by an enormous stylized fist. The new president of the SKS CC was Slobodan Miloševic (b. 1941), the former chairman of the Bank of Belgrade (Beogradska banka), who was not a known quantity to the wider public. With him, the Serbian Communists acquired a militant leader, who was increasingly in agreement with the basic premises of the memorandum. Milošević quickly sensed an opportunity in Serbian fears. He put the Kosovar Communists on a permanent defensive with charges about their complicity in the alleged "genocide" of Serbs.[23] By November 1986 radical Kosovar Serbs started a campaign against Kosovo's twice-purged and generally docile Albanian communist leadership. Serb delegations descended on the Federal Assembly in Belgrade and made emotional pleas for protection against the allegedly widespread politically motivated rapes of Serbian women by Albanians ("the Serb has taken a vow to remain in Kosovo; let them rape, we shall rape, too").[24] The stereotype of fertile Albanian families that will drown the Serbs in a sea of white skullcaps increasingly received official sanction.[25]

Milošević's encouragement of Albanian stereotypes was in the function of his immediate political solution—the revision of the constitution of 1974 by a sharp reduction in the autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina. Speaking to the Party activists in Kragujevac in December 1986, he formulated his program:

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> Serbia does not seek to be more of a republic than other republics, but, it is certain, she cannot permit to be less of a republic than the others. The fact that Serbia has two socialist autonomous provinces in her composition cannot be a reason for her to be reduced to her inner territory. . . .

But precisely because he was aware that Serbia's control over the provinces would make her "more of a republic than the others" (her representation in the federation would be nearly tripled by a sleight of legal mind), he predicted that:

> the changes that I have mentioned will be difficult to achieve. Those areas and individuals whose interests are being imperiled [*ugrožavaju*] will be against [change].[26]

Since the Yugoslav constitution could be changed only by unanimous agreement of all six republics and two autonomous provinces, Milošević could only prevail by putsch.

Milošević's intentions could be realized only by a full political and national homogenization of Serbs. He announced his intentions in the night between April 24 and 25, 1987, when he delivered a passionate speech to the Serb representatives on the Field of Kosovo, some hours after their meeting was marred in a clash with the predominantly Albanian Kosovar police. Milošević took a stand against the police and absolved the Serbs of any ideological deviations in their attempts to undo the autonomy of Kosovo. "Very briefly," he said, "meetings like this are not the meetings of nationalists. These meetings are not hostile meetings."[27] But in order to upset the years of Titoist policy in Kosovo, Milošević needed first to purge the SKS of any waverers. This was accomplished in September 1987, at the Eighth Session of the SKS CC, when he purged Dragiša Pavlović and Ivan Stambolić, the representatives of a somewhat more moderate wing of Serbian Communists, from the leadership.

The Serbian communist opposition to Milošević was aware of how Milošević fitted into the gallery of Serbian fears, but also of its own marginalism. Bogdan Bogdanović, former mayor of Belgrade, architect-builder, and the conscience of the Serbian Left, sent a letter to Milošević in which he said that Serbia was tired of her leaders and her misdirected history:

> Serbia is tired of her fear of abstraction, of higher abstractions, above all, she is tired of her simplified reasoning, of her concretism—the most

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> concrete in the world. . . . Serbia on the East, Serbia on the margins of civilization, tired of the civilization that has never really touched her. . . . Serbia is tired of her wrangle with Europe, which she does not know or understand, of her wrangle with Central Europe, which she belittles and disdains, she is tired of her inexplicable and comical Austrophobia . . . tired of her Eastern option, of her mini-Messianist panliberationist obsession, tired of her all-popular and all-progressive Prometheuses, of her eternal orthodoxy, political and every other. . . .[28]

In a sense, Bogdanović anticipated Milošević's next step, the creation of new mass organizations that would try to destabilize as much of Yugoslavia as was possible through extralegal violence. These "meetings of solidarity" were the spearhead of what Milošević's controlled media increasingly called "the antibureaucratic revolution." The "return of the people" to politics meant mass demonstrations organized by various Serbian nationalist leaders, and ultimately by Milošević's police, against the constituted leaderships of Kosovo, Vojvodina, and Montenegro, all of which were ousted under pressure in 1988 and early 1989, only to be replaced by the officials that were devoted to Milošević. But these were areas vulnerable to Milošević's bullying. The real obstacle lay elsewhere, in the northwest—in Slovenia and Croatia.

Serbia's relations with the "northwest" were always tenuous. More exactly, during the interwar period, Croatia was the leader of resistance to Serbian supremacy, and was treated accordingly. This rôle continued in the postwar period, but with a difference. Whereas the interwar Croat struggle, led by the Croat Peasant Party of Stjepan Radić (who was mortally wounded on the floor of the Belgrade parliament in 1928) and Vladko Maček (who was jailed and exiled by the dictatorial regime of King Alexander in the early 1930s), was morally clear and unblemished, Croat nationalism became stained by the record of Ustašas (Insurgents), a militant independence organization that graduated into fascism. Italy and Germany nurtured this organization in the 1930s, alternately promoting or demoting the Ustaša role to fit the frosty or balmy weather in relations with Belgrade. After the Axis attack on Yugoslavia in 1941, Mussolini and Hitler installed the Ustašas in power in Zagreb, making them the nucleus of a dependent regime of the newly created Independent State of Croatia, an Italo-German condominium predicated on the abolition of Yugoslavia.[29]

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Had the Croats been asked in 1941 whether they favored independence, most of them probably would have responded affirmatively. Berlin and Rome capitalized on this sentiment to impose pseudo-independence onto a strangely lopsided Croatia, which was simultaneously reduced in the areas of solid Croat majorities (Dalmatia) and enlarged where the Croats constituted a minority (Bosnia-Hercegovina). Moreover, they also imposed an ideological dictatorship of the minuscule Ustaša organization, whose extant military units in Italy did not exceed more than some 500 men in April 1941. Had the Ustašas simply minded the wartime Axis store, their notoriety probably would not have surpassed that of the Vlaamsche Nationaalverbond in Belgium or the Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging in the Netherlands. But their record was so appalling (violent persecution of the Serbs, Jews, Gypsies, antifascist Croats) that it became an irresistible argument for anybody opposed not only to Croat independence, but to Croat individuality itself. Henceforth, Croat self-interest of whatever provenance (including reform communist and liberal) could easily be tarred with the brush of fascism, by the help of innuendoes, criminally construed. It was a temptation that no embattled Serbian or centralist tendency failed to utilize after the war. Moreover, the tendency was to exaggerate Ustaša crimes. So, for example, the notorious Ustaša concentration camp at Jasenovac, which claimed the lives of some 60,000 to 80,000 inmates, not all of them Serbs, was recklessly touted as the "third largest extermination camp in Europe," in which 700,000 "Serbs alone" were murdered by the Ustašas.[30]

The exaggeration of Ustaša crimes was meant to buttress the thesis about the vastness of their support. In fact, only a minority of the Croats sided with the Ustašas. In the absence of a Croat noncommunist resistance movement, Croats massively participated in the Communist-led Partisans and thereby gave ample testimony to their anti-Ustašism. In the second half of 1944 the Partisan movement of Croatia counted some 150,000 combatants under arms— 100,070 in operative units made up of Croats (60,703 or 60.66 percent), Serbs (24,528 or 24.51 percent), Slovenes (5,113 or 5.11 percent), and others.[31] (The participation of Serbs in Croatian Partisan units was higher than their percentage in the population of Croatia—14.5 percent in 1948—and can be explained by the harshness of Ustaša anti-Serb terror.) Yet all the evidence of Croat antifascism did not

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seem to rehabilitate the Croat national movement. Outside of Yugoslavia, Tito, Ivan Ribar, and the elite of Croat Partisans were only Yugoslavs. But Ante Pavelić and his Ustašas were Croats. And if Croat Communists, like Andrija Hebrang in 1948 or the reformist leadership of the League of Communists of Croatia (SKH) in 1971, demonstrated an excess of permitted Croat national allegiance, they too became Ustašas, both at home and abroad. In Milošević's arrangement, this posthumously happened to Tito. In the words of Brana Crnčević, a Belgrade satirist and polemicist who is close to Milošević:

> It is clear that Broz [Tito], defending the Independent State of Croatia, concealed the truth about Jasenovac and the genocide against the Serbs. It is even clearer that the Yugoslavia of [Tito's retreat at] Brioni was Broz's toy—a piece of Communist tomfoolery with a new Independent State of Croatia under the ideological chocolate. . . . [32]

The second picture (see *Figure 2*) from September 1989 shows the ghoulish catch.[33] Two Ustašas, their military caps clearly labeled with the letter *U,* are angling on a bank of a river. Their rod is attached to a barbed wire with which they play a hooked Serb child with a characteristic *šajkača* on its bleeding head. One of the child's eyes is plucked out. Additional children's corpses are floating down the river. Limbs of other children are sticking out of a fish basket. The Ustašas' idiot faces are alight with the excitement of the game. They are enjoying the sport of netting and clubbing their victims. As a result, communist or other attempts that point to the crimes of the Serbian Chetniks, must be seen as equivocation. In the words of *The Memorandum of SANU,* "the symmetry in historical faults, imposed by the ruling [communist] ideology and politics, cannot be accepted."[34]

Eugen Dido Kvaternik, a leading member of the Ustaša movement who was personally responsible for the scale of anti-Serb violence, had the occasion to reflect on this subject from his uneasy exile in Buenos Aires during the 1950s. He correctly concluded that "anti-Serbianism was the essence of the Ustaša doctrine, its *raison d'être* and *ceterum censeo.*"[35] That being so, Serbian nationalist historiography, aligned to Milošević's movement, set out to prove that every resistance to Belgrade, not just among the Croats, necessarily tended in the direction of Ustašism and genocide. And, no less important, that Ustašism was not a period piece, typical of the age of fascism, but

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Figure 2.

a continued Croat tendency. The first explicit statement on this topic was an essay by the historian Vasilije Krestić in 1986. Basing it on

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faulty interpretations, ten quotes (spanning the period from 1700 to 1902), four incidents (only one of them serious), and ex post facto jottings of Ivan Ribar, Krestić concluded that the:

> genocide against the Serbs in Ustaša [Croatia] is a specific phenomenon in our [Serb] centuries-old common life with the Croats. The protracted development of the genocidal idea in certain centers of Croat society, which, as Dr. Ribar witnesses, did not necessarily have some narrow—but rather a broad—base, took deep root in the consciousness of many generations.[36]

Less sophisticated writers reduced these conclusions to a simple assertion about the "genocidal nature" of the Croats, or, less cumbersomely, to a statement that all Croats were really Ustašas.

In 1989 the Croats were only slowly regaining their grip after the period of great "Croat silence" that had obtained since December 1971, when Tito removed the reformist leadership of the SKH headed by Savka Dabčević-Kućar and Miko Tripalo. These moderate Communists pursued a course of reforms very similar to Dubček's reform movement in Czechoslovakia. The Croat reformers, like all the East European "revisionists" of the 1960s and early 1970s, fell because they sought to loosen the command system in politics and economy. Tito would not permit this course of action. "I tell you openly," he said in December 1971, "Yugoslavia would fall apart were it not for the League of Communists—if [the league] rushed headlong into decline."[37] As a result, the removal of Croat reformers was justified as a measure in the struggle against divisive nationalism, which the reformers allegedly used as a base for pressure against the federal center. But, as so often happens, the scope of the purge became uncontrollable and profoundly offended the Croat national sensitivities, especially when it took the form of revanchism by the Serb minority in Croatia. The SKH, which only recently (for the first time since the war) regained a modicum of respectability as an institution that was unembarrassed by its Croat trappings, once again became the party of repression and careerism. Its dubious national loyalties were underscored by the redefinition of Croat nationalism as the principal bastion of "counterrevolution." In Tito's words, "for as long as we have an opponent before us, we must strike at him, we must hit him. If reasoning doesn't work, there are other means."[38]

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In 1972 Tito's handpicked group of new SKH leaders, the Husáks and Bil'aks of Croatia, used the "other means" to strike at thousands of Croat political and cultural figures. Imprisonments and show trials, firings and purges in the universities and the news media, massive political and "economic" emigration, and the exaltation of suborned witnesses and corrupt police agents accompanied the submission of Croatia. The leading figures of postcommunist Croatia (Dražen Budiša, Vlado Gotovac, Marko Veselica, Franjo Tudjman, to mention only some of the leaders of the new parties) were among the imprisoned. The Catholic Church, whose hierarchy was reviled, but not prosecuted, became the only vehicle for contrary opinions. The real effect, at least for the Croats, was the lasting delegitimation of Yugoslavia. The quiet putsch of 1971–1972, which the Western reporters played down in the interest of maintaining Tito's pro-Western nonalignment, made Croatia an extra in the politics of high Titoism. Croatia's leadership from 1972 to 1989 was fundamentally illegitimate. It mattered little whether this cast included corrupt dogmatists like Stipe Šuvar, the penultimate head of the Federal Party, or the opportunistic operators like Ante Marković, the last premier of Yugoslavia. Nor could the marginalization of Croatia be improved by the fact that Serbia, too, became marginalized in the purge of its liberal leadership in 1972, nor by the (con)federalist gains in the constitution of 1974.

The imposed leadership of the SKH bungled along in the late 1970s as the vaumure (but not the squire's hall) of Fortress Tito. Inured to the method of political disqualification, the Croatian Titoists felt that they could easily silence the nationalist Serbian intelligentsia after the death of Tito. And, indeed, Stipe Šuvar tried to put pressure on the Serbian leadership with his role of "deviationists" ("The White Book" of 1984), which was always bulkier in its Belgrade part than in the sections for his well-patrolled Zagreb. But this stratagem became useless the moment the SKS joined forces with the nationalist dissidents and started encouraging the obloquy of "Red Ustašas" for the denationalized Croat Titoists. The irony of this predicament must have escaped the Croatian leadership, which took some time to get its bearings. Moreover, it was genuinely difficult to adjust to an iconoclast like Milošević, who was bending or destroying all of Tito's rules. As a result, the Croat Titoists fought among themselves about the best way to stop Milošević (Šuvar's "leftists"

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versus Mika Špiljak's "haretoises"), but, being a compromised and thinning establishment, they simply had no wherewithal to mount the only successful strategy—a democratic alternative. That task would befall Slovenia.

The Slovenes have tended to constitute the blunt angle of the Yugoslav triangle. Least numerous—but most industrially prosperous—among the principal South Slavic nations, their lands were coveted by Italo-German imperialistic projects, which divided Slovenia between themselves in wartime. Their history, too, unlike that of Croatia, was not burdened by traditions of statehood that are rooted in the gentry, which made them less disgruntled with Serbian primacy. For as long as Rome and Vienna (or Berlin) represented a threat, the Slovenes found fewer risks and greater advantages in the Yugoslav state than in any alternative. Moreover, since no issues of territory or minority status created problems in their relations with the Serbs, the Slovenes saw no advantage in backing Croatia. During the interwar period, as well as the period under Tito, their leaders skirted the Serb-Croat battlefields, always to the advantage of Belgrade. As a result, they were permitted greater leeway in expressing doubts about centralism, as Edvard Kardelj, Tito's heir apparent, regularly did from 1957 onward. Kardelj's reformism was predicated on gradual decentralization. As the chief architect of Tito's constitution of 1974, Kardelj probably did not anticipate that his handiwork would prompt the storm of Serbian resentment. He was not fated to confront it. Kardelj died a year before his chief. Part of his illegitimate inheritance was a widely held Serb notion that a Croat and a Slovene had sealed Serbian fate for four decades.

Slovenian leadership would have been troubled by such charges in more volatile times. In the 1980s, however, Slovenia was not threatened by Italy, Austria, and other Western countries, which were no longer enemies but models to be emulated. Instead, the only obstacle to Slovenia's dreams of gradual Westernization was to be found in Yugoslavia. Repression against the Albanians of Kosovo, the growing involvement of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) in the Kosovo quagmire, the retrograde policies of Slobodan Milošević—these were the source of worry in Slovenia. By contrast, from the middle of the 1980s, the Party leadership in Ljubljana put confidence in what was then called Eurocommunism, a tendency that culminated in the adoption of the slogan "Europe now!" in 1989. Indeed,

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there were few discernible differences between such technocratic Italian Communists as Giorgio Napolitano and Milan Kučan, the leader of the Slovene Communists. The similarity was expressed in a liberal attitude toward the growing "alternative movement"—the democratic opposition that increasingly combined Slovene national demands with harsh criticism of the JNA/Serbian policies in Kosovo.

"The Slovene revival" was essentially the handiwork of elite intellectuals, gathered above all around the journal *Nova revija* (New Review), and of various muckrakers and social rebels, who were best represented by the iconoclastic weekly *Mladina* (Youth). This typically Central European dissident milieu, unhampered and to some extent even encouraged by the liberal Slovenian leadership, became the envy of the Croat opposition and the refuge of Croat, Bosnian Muslim, Albanian, and even Serbian dissidents. Slovene dissident journals published the first legal statements by the 1971 generation of silenced Croat intellectuals. *Mladina* was the first Yugoslav journal that went after the JNA to expose the corruption of leading generals, including that of Admiral Branko Mamula, the federal secretary of defense ("Mamula go home!"),[39] and arms trafficking with the repressive regimes like that of Mengistu Hailé Mariam in Ethiopia. Slovene intellectuals like Taras Kermauner were the first to challenge the chauvinism not only of Serbian leadership, but of the broad consensus of intellectual opinion. In his "Letters to a Serbian friend," Kermauner recommended that his counterparts:

> abandon [their] centralism, demands for a united rail system, for a common educational program, for the Kosovization of Yugoslavia, for a unitary Yugoslav official language, for homogeneous society! For everything that the other nations reject! Should you travel with us to Cythera, which is to say Civil Society, you will be able to live as you wish! Nobody will expect you to submit to others, nor will you need to crack the whip over the unsubmissive.[40]

As "the Slovene syndrome" became the chief alternative to Milošević and the JNA, notably as a result of a military trial against *Mladina*'s writer Janez Janša in June 1988 on the trumped-up charges of divulging military secrets, Slovene criticisms became even more pointed. The Slovenian Party press included demands on Serbia to:

> give full autonomy to Vojvodina and Kosovo and the problem of SR Serbia will be removed. Or otherwise: reconcile yourselves for once

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> with the fact that the participation of Serbia in the creation of a second [communist] Yugoslavia was less essential than in the creation of the first [interwar] Yugoslavia! Give up, while there is still time, the myth that Serbia will play the main role in the Balkans and [Yugoslavia].[41]

Slovenia was taking a stand that traditionally belonged to Croatia. As a result, in the eyes of Miloševi ć's controlled media, the Slovenes became political Croats.

In his "Eleventh Letter to a Serbian friend," Kermauner declared that, though Catholic, he would remain an incorrigible "Calvinist," and that an analysis of Slovene Catholicism would show the infusion of Protestant themes that differentiated Slovenes not only from "Orthodox, Muslim, and Stalinist Yugoslavia, but also from the rest of Catholic Yugoslavia."[42] The disclaimer, though largely fallacious, was important. The communality of Slovenes and Croats was built on their common Catholic tradition, the link that would not be lost on the Serbian polemicists. Not surprisingly, 1987 and 1988 were the years of a renewed campaign against the Catholic Church, and specifically against the Vatican, which was being presented as historically motivated by a "blind hatred toward Slavdom and Orthodoxy." It was claimed that the aim of the Vatican in the 1930s was to "Catholicize the Serbs with the aid of the Concordat," which failed to take effect over the objections of the Serbian Orthodox Church; that having failed, the "Vatican lost interest in good relations with Yugoslavia and worked with all powers at its disposal, that is, clericalist politics, indoctrinated priests, and the Ustašas—the battering-ram of Croat chauvinism—to destroy Yugoslavia."[43]

The anti-Catholic authors did not overlook Slovene Catholicism. Indeed, it was claimed that Slovene Catholic prelates, like Bishop Anton Jeglič of Ljubljana, had taken the lead in loyalist pro-Habsburg attacks on Serbia in 1914 and that the Slovene Catholic press had invented the slogan "Hang the Serbs from the willow trees!"[44] But it was the Croat Catholics who were cast in the lead role of the Vatican's domestic accomplices. The third picture (see *Figure 3*), from January 1990, shows an inquisitorial Catholic prelate with an Ustaša *U* under his pectoral cross. There is a decorative eye on his episcopal miter. Indeed, he is playing with a wreath of threaded human eyes. His sinister smile watches over Serbian children that are held captive behind barbed wire, most of their eyes plucked out.[45]

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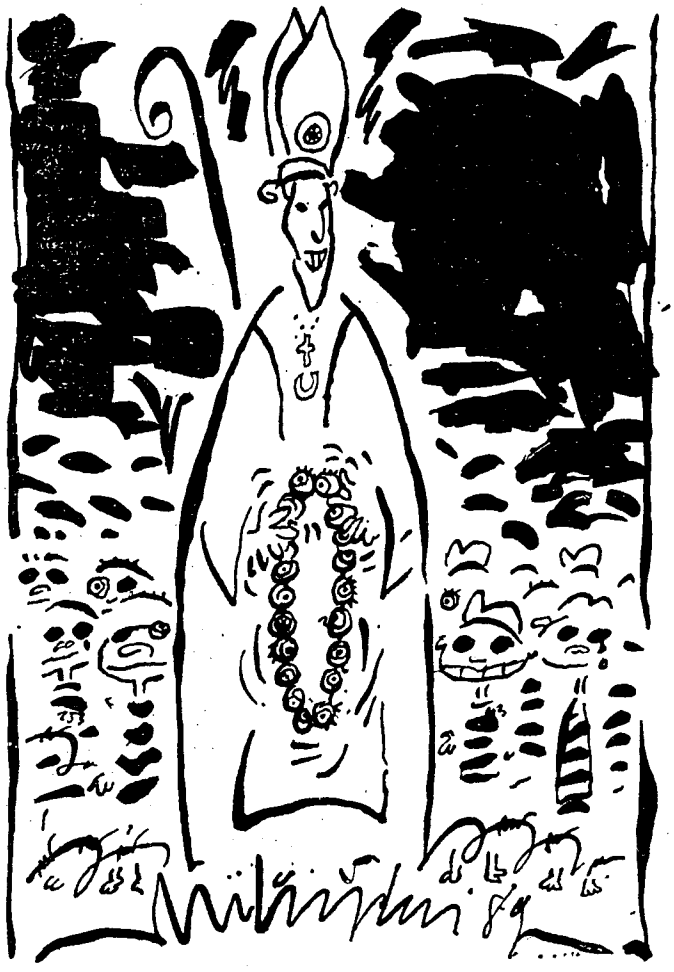

Figure 3.

The prelate could have been Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac (1898–1960), the metropolitan of Croatia, who was the favorite target of Serbian polemicists despite his frequent protests against Ustaša misdeeds.[46] The target, however, was not that specific. To be sure,

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the Catholic Church in Croatia was the institutional home of unworthy and even criminal clerics and laymen in the course of Axis-dependent Ustaša dictatorship. But so was the Serbian Orthodox Church, whose clergy produced their share of Chetnik commanders. The point, however, was not whether either ecclesiastical organization failed to hold the hand of political gangsters in their respective backyards. The Catholic Church was simply to be seen as an anti-Serbian and anti-Yugoslav institution. In the words of Milorad Ekmečić, a leading Serb historian, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the "Yugoslavs were as united as the Catholic Church succeeded in maintaining Croat and Slovene separatism." Therefore, the full integration of the South Slavs always depended on the "downfall of religious sentiment," but mainly among the Catholics.[47] The fear of Catholicism is often presented less elegantly. Extremist Serbian painter Milić Stanković (Milić of Mačva), recently put it this way: "The papal penetration of the East is relying on an artificially created Croat nation . . . and soon [will be relying] on the Nazi-Croat state of extreme proselytistic intentions."[48]

The various systems of collusion not only extend to covert ties between the Vatican and Moscow (in 1934, "at the recommendation of the Vatican, Josip Broz [Tito] revived the broken channel between the Comintern and Ustaša terrorists in the emigration"[49]), but embrace other conspirators, including the Masons and modernism (in the system of columnist Dragoš Kalajić and the Serb Party of Saint Sava),[50] Macedonians and Muslims. The fourth picture from the Serbian Grand Guignol (see *Figure 4*) is titled "A House Built on Cooperation."[51] It shows the contention between a Catholic bishop and a Muslim imam over a Serb child. "Catholicize!" shouts the mitered prelate. "Yok," the fezzed Muslim with an unpleasant razor shouts in Turkish negation, "Circumcise!" The dispute is resolved in the lower frame. The bishop and the imam, in a virtual parable of how nationalist Serbs view the fate of Bosnia-Hercegovina, smile at one another as the former plucks the child's eyes out and the latter holds the child by the foreskin.

The Croat reactions to the manufacture of Serbian fears were slow and typically incredulous. In the absence of any strong central authority, with conservative Titoists still more or less in charge in the late 1980s, the Croat political scene needed new strategies of self-defense and new forces to implement them. Milošević's ruling

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Figure 4.

SKS, renamed the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) in 1990, retained the structure of a Leninist cadre party, but substituted the ideology of

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Titoist communism with a hybrid of anti-Westernism, Serbian nationalism, and bellicosity. Milošević's hold over the Serbian Party-state with all of its attendant instruments of persuasion and control legitimated and popularized the Serbian culture of fear. An equivalent development was impossible within the Croatian communist organization. The Croat variant of Central European "refolution" (as T. Garton Ash put it) meant the decriminalization of dissent, but not a license for hoary supremacist ambitions. By the spring of 1989 the first Croat "alternative groups" got their start, among them the Croat Social-Liberal Alliance (later Party, HSLS), the Association for Yugoslav Democratic Initiative (UJDI), the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ), and numerous others. These groups, most of which were registered as legal parties by the end of the year, represented the whole political spectrum from post-Marxist Yugoslavism and social democracy to the Croat integral right. With the exception of the Serb minority organizations, all of them (including the revived Communists, newly renamed the Party of Democratic Change) were set on a defense course against Milošević's Serbia.

In January 1990, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia held its fourteenth (and last) congress and proceeded to fall apart in the struggle between Milošević and his opponents, notably the delegations of Slovenian and Croatian Communists. With the collapse of the Titoist party the whole Yugoslav project, which was held and maintained by communist methods of governance since the war, itself ground to a halt. As a result, the democratic option could not be a statewide solution. Multiparty politics and the absence of coercion and ideological control succeeded in a piecemeal fashion in those republics where the Communists became agreeable to changes, first in Slovenia, then Croatia, and finally in Macedonia and Bosnia-Hercegovina. It could not succeed in the nonexisting center, whose only viable part was the terrified and disoriented JNA, the Party-army without the Party and increasingly without a country. Nor could it succeed in Serbia and Montenegro, where the renationalized Party-state reconstituted itself under a new label, but with far harsher consequences for the minorities, notably Albanians. The anxieties of the Serbian-Montenegrin axis and the JNA were fueled by the systemic changes in the "northwest."

The first free and multiparty elections in postwar Yugoslavia were held in Slovenia and Croatia in April and May 1990. Serbian public

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opinion greeted them with fear. The caricature of the Croatian elections (see *Figure 5*) shows four Ustašas in black uniforms riding their human beasts of burden in an aquatic race that is cheered by

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Figure 5.

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knife-wielding Ustašas on both sides of the pond.[52] It is really remarkable to what extent the last ties of trust between the Serbs and Croats melted by April 1990, a year and a month before the massacre of a dozen Croatian policemen by the Serbian irregulars in Borovo Selo, eastern Slavonia, which is generally regarded as the beginning of the Croatian war. It should be remembered, however, that the Serbian nationalist camp did not regard the victory of the nationalist parties in Slovenia (DEMOS) and Croatia (HDZ) as a qualitatively new development. They viewed the Croat Communists as only somewhat less "Ustašoid" than Franjo Tudjman, whose predictable historicism was expended in a series of futile negotiations with Milošević, whose network in the JNA and the Serb communities in Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina had already laid the groundwork for war.

In January 1991, the JNA tried to prevent the self-arming of Croatia and thereby provoked a state crisis. The consequences were meager for Croatia, but in the process the JNA emancipated itself from any federal control. The disappearing government of prime minister Ante Marković should be mentioned in this context alone. There followed more futile negotiations among the leaders of the republics (not all of whom were equal in power, even in relative terms) and hopeless internationally sponsored attempts at jump starting the vehicle of the wrecked federal presidency, whose four Serbian-Montenegrin members blocked the four representatives of the other republics in maintaining the system of rotating chairmanship and every other aspect of regular procedure. In June Slovenia and Croatia proclaimed their independence and incurred further JNA intervention that was sponsored and financed by Serbia. By September Slovenia's independence was no longer in doubt, the conflict having turned into a bloody war of conquest ("liberation," in Belgrade parlance) of all Croatian areas with a significant Serb presence.

The sloppy and brutish manner of the JNA should be noted. Tito's army was purged of or deserted by most of its non-Serb commanders in June 1991. In the war that followed, the JNA was de-Titoized and de-Croatianized. This quiet process was really a vast revolution, especially if the role of Partisan Croatia is kept in mind in the early history of the JNA. The army's ideological attributes no longer being clear, it entered into consensual relations with various irregular

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Serbian units that were connected with the Milošević-sponsored Serb "autonomous regions" of Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina, as well as with other extremist private armies of Serbian provenance (notably the renewed Chetnik units of Vojislav Šešelj). The changes in the JNA's officer cadre, as well as the presence of the "irregulars" and undisciplined reservists in the JNA's war machine, explain the brutality of attacks in Vukovar, Osijek, Vinkovci, Petrinja, Karlovac, Zadar, and Dubrovnik. After a balance sheet of some 10,000 dead and 500,000 refugees, after the shooting of the helicopter with the EC observers in January 1992, the degenerate JNA is astonished only about the absence of fear among its opponents. A Belgrade reservist who returned from the Vukovar front noted that it is generally assumed that Croats are cowards: "But, that is not true. They fight like lions. Never mind whether they are right . . . but their bravery cannot be denied."[53]

Without communism there would have been no postwar Yugoslav state. That state was held together by the skillful use of fear: the fear of Great Serbian restoration, the fear of a return to the wartime massacres, and (after 1948) the fear of the Soviet Union. Though these fears were not completely imaginary, Tito's illegitimate revolutionary regime, like Ferrero's Napoleon, feared everything because it was sure of nothing. The remnants of the Titoist regime, notably Milošević's ideologically transformed revolutionary government in Serbia, have generated new fears:

> Le gouvernement révolutionnaire est la régime de la peur par excellence, son destin infernal est que plus il cherche à se mettre à l'abri, plus il a peur des dangers, vrais et imaginaires, qui le menacent.[54]

Milošević fears the restoration of Titoism, revanchism of the "anti-Serbian coalition" headed by Croatia, and Western Europe headed by Germany. "Europe must know," Milić of Mačva wrote from the ruins of Vukovar in December 1991 that:

> Vukovar was liberated from the Croat Nazis. They were helped by Central European scum. They crawled from under the papal tiara, as a dart of a serpent's tongue that protruded from the bloated Kraut and Eurocommunal overstretched anus. The figures of Genscher, Kohl, van den Broek, de Michelis, Mock, and Waldheim will help me finish my new painting "The Mocking of Christ," in the manner of Bosch. The title will be augmented into "The Mocking of Serbian Christ."[55]

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James Baker's State Department strengthened Milošević's fears through its dogged support for the integrity of Yugoslavia on what amounted to a Titoist model, its encouragement of an integral military force, and its maladroit criticisms of Germany. America has its own fears, one of the more notable being the fear of nationalism. It is almost as if it were not understood in Washington that the East European struggle for national identity cannot be separated from any movement for democracy and human rights. All the same, the establishments that lack a nuanced understanding of nationalism should not embarrass themselves as President Bush certainly did in his Kiev speech of 1 August 1991 by confusing independence with "local despotism." A proper understanding of nationalism, by the Left no less than by Western governments, presupposes political analysis. Nationalisms can be as far apart as the socialism of François Mitterand is from the socialism of Pol Pot. Moreover, in Eastern Europe, and not there alone, freedom *is* the same as independence. Any premature attempt to influence events in the direction of interdependence will not work until the societies of Eastern Europe are secure in their nationhood. The most far-reaching consequence of the demise of Yugoslavia might be Western splits over these issues.

It is entirely possible that the fragmentation of ex-communist multinational states (Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Yugoslavia) is only the beginning of the breakdown of large systems. The growth of centralized industrial societies, certainly in Eastern Europe, might just have exceeded the human potential for adjustment. Smaller, though not necessarily autarkic, states, organized as units of production, might yet become scarcity's answer to the gluttonous capitalist market. Their size will be limited by their aspirations to legitimacy. Serbian society, too, will find its way to legitimacy through the knowledge of the cause that brought it torment.

Ivan Djurić, a noted Serbian historian, one of the losing candidates in the presidential elections that were won by Milošević in December 1990, and, of late, an exile in France, recently noted that after the breach of the Salonika front in 1918 Serbia's peasant-soldiers:

> started to kiss the ground not at Kajmakčalan [the post-1913 frontier of enlarged Serbia], nor at Veles [central Macedonia], nor at Skoplje [northern Macedonia], but at the point of the current frontier between Serbia and Macedonia. Although Serbia entered the First World War

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> after Macedonia became a part of its territory, the peasants felt the limits of Serbia. Likewise, when the Partisans retreated from Serbia in 1941 across the Uvac river [into the Sandžac], these internationalist fighters often took a lump of Serbian soil and put it in their kerchiefs. People feel very deeply what is theirs and what is not theirs.[56]

Therefore, healing between Serbia and her neighbors, above all, will mean the acceptance of Serbia's real borders. And the fear of real crocodiles, not of the witch doctor's mask of fear.

ENDNOTES

[1]Guglielmo Ferrero, *Pouvoir: Les Génies invisibles de la Cité* (New York: Brentano's, 1942), 9.

[2]Robert D. Kaplan, "Croatianism," *The New Republic* (25 November 1991): 18.

[3]"Russia and Germany," *London Times,* 23 December 1991.

[4]Ferrero, 44.

[5]On the history of South Slavic relations, with special reference to national ideologies, see Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origin, History, Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984).

[6]Ferrero, 42.

[7]Vuk Karadžić, *Srpske narodne poslovice i druge različne kao one u običaj uzete rieči* (Belgrade: Srpska kraljevska državna štamparija, 1900), 372.

[8]On the 1980s background to the current South Slavic conflicts, see Ivo Banac, "Post-Communism as Post-Yugoslavism: The Yugoslav Non-Revolutions of 1989–1990," in Ivo Banac, ed., *Eastern Europe in Revolution* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992),168–87.

[9]*Književne novine* (Belgrade), 1 May 1989, 2.

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[10]In a key wartime theoretical document, Tito described prewar Yugoslavia in the following way: "Born in Corfu, London, and Paris, the Yugoslavia of Versailles became the most typical country of national oppression in Europe. Croats, Slovenes, and Montenegrins were subordinate peoples—unequal subjects of Yugoslavia. Macedonians, Albanians, and others were enslaved and exposed to extermination. Muslim, German, and Hungarian minorities served as small change or an instrument in the struggle against the Croats and other peoples of Yugoslavia." Josip Broz Tito, "Nacionalno pitanje u Jugoslaviji u svjetlosti narodnooslobodilačke borbe," *Sabrana djela* (Belgrade: Komunist, 1982), vol. 13, (1982): 96.

[11]Dušan Bilandžić, *Historija Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije: Glavni procesi, 1918–1985,* 3rd ed. (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1985), 264.

[12]Ibid., 295.

[13]At the Eighth Congress of the SKJ (December 1964), Kardelj noted that the "point of departure for economic relations among the nationalities is certainly the economic independence that will guarantee each people work independence and free disposal with the fruits of labor, that is, the building of the material base for the development of its own culture and civilization." For his part, it was at this Party congress that Tito explicitly condemned unitarism. He denounced those individuals who "confound the unity of peoples with the liquidation of nations and the creation of something new, artificial; that is, a unitary Yugoslav nation, which looks a bit like assimilation and bureaucratic centralization, like unitarism and hegemonism." *Osmi kongres SKJ* (Belgrade: Kultura, 1964), 97, 32.

[14]From the discussion of Jovan Veselinov cited in *Četvrti plenum Centralnog komiteta Saveza komunista Jugoslavije* (Belgrade: Komunist, 1966), 42. Those were not the "slogans" of lone "hostile elements," but of the establishment. According to Rajko Djaković, the chief of the Serbian security apparatus *after* the fall of Ranković, the campaign against Ranković and the security service, notably in Kosovo, "opened mistrust precisely of the Serbs and Serb cadres." Cited in Zdravko Vuković, *Od deformacija SDB do maspoka i liberalizma: Moji stenografski zapisi 1966–1972. godine* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1989), 75.

[15]Dobrica Ćosić, *Stvarno i moguće: Članci i ogledi* (Rijeka: Otokar Keršovani, 1982), 59. Ćosić's party career ended with this speech; his career in dissidence commenced.

[16]Dragoslav Draža Marković, *Život i politika, 1967–1978*, vol. 2 (Belgrade: Rad, 1987), 308, 328, 373–74.

[17]Gojko Djogo, *Vunena vremena* (London: Naša reč, 1982), 65.

[18]Vladimir Dedijer, *Novi prilozi za biografiju Josipa Broza Tita* (Rijeka: Liburnija, 1981). Tito's relations with the Soviets, his love affairs, the Partisan use of terror ("retortion"), and negotiations with the Germans in 1943 are among the subjects that Dedijer opened in this collection.

[19]Dobrica Ćosić, *Grešnik* (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1985), 238.

[20]"Memorandum SANU," *Duga* (Belgrade) (June 1989): 31.

[21]Ibid., 35, 36, 38, 39, 43, 44, 46.

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[22]Ibid., 37.

[23]Azem Vllasi, an Albanian and the head of the Kosovo Party committee, responded with a countercharge that Serbs who emigrate from Kosovo, especially intellectuals and notables, are cowards. "Tko su kukavice," *Danas* (Zagreb), (4 November 1966): 6.

[24]Svetislav Spasojević "Ostatak naroda ostaje," *NIN* (Belgrade), (9 November 1986): 13.

[25]The high Albanian fertility is frequently explained as a conscious program. In the words of a member of a Belgrade research institute, "This is not a case of some alleged Muslim tradition, but of a deeply conceived infernal plan to force the Serbs to emigrate from their age-old hearths by all means available." Milan Vojnović, "Glavni problemi srpskog naroda," *Otadžbina* (Nova Pazova) (8 August 1991): 9.

[26]Slobodan Milošević, *Godine raspleta* (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1989), 121.

[27]Ibid., 140.

[28]Bogdan Bogdanović, *Mrtvouzice: Mentalne zamke staljinizma* (Zagreb: August Cesarec, 1988), 47.

[29]No satisfactory study of the Ustašas exists in any language. For the early years of the movement, see James J. Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism, 1927–1937* (New York: Garland, 1987).

[30]The Jasenovac figures are taken from a reconstruction by Mirko Peršen, himself a former inmate in Jasenovac, who claims than the total number of inmates killed in the Ustaša camps ranged from 80,000 to 120,000. See Željko Krušelj, "Rasplitanje jasenovačkog mita," *Danas* (Zagreb) (7 November 1989): 23. On the question of the Second World War losses on the territory of Yugoslavia and the actual range of Ustaša complicity, see Ljubo Boban, "Jasenovac and the Manipulation of History," *East European Politics and Societies* 4 (3)(1990): 580–92. According to recent statistical analyses, Yugoslavia lost 1,014,000 people (or 5.9 percent of its population) in the war. Serbs lost 487,000 (6.9 percent), Croats 207,000 (5.4 percent), Bosnian Muslims 86,000 (6.8 percent), and Jews 60,000 (77.9 percent) of their conationals. Bogoljub Kočović, *Žrtve Drugog svetskog rata u Jugoslaviji* (London: Naše delo, 1985), 124–26.

[31]"Hrvatska," *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*, 1988, vol. 5, 371.

[32]Brana Crnčević, "Odakle početi," *Duga* (Belgrade)(21 June 1991):4.

[33]*Književne novine* (Belgrade), 1 September 1989, 2.

[34]"Memorandum SANU," *Duga* (Belgrade) (June 1989): 46. It is to the credit of Mr. Mihajlović that he notes the crimes of the Chetniks in some of his caricatures, e.g., *Književne novine* (Belgrade)(15 September 1990): 2.

[35]Cited in Jere Jareb, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike* (Buenos Aires: Knjižnica Hrvatske revije, 1960), n. 114, 90.

[36]Vasilije Krestić, "O genezi genocida nad Srbima u NDH," *Književne novine* (Belgrade)(15 September 1986): 5. It is significant that Krestić attributes the origin of at least some "genocidal ideas" to the Croat "fear of absorption" by the

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numerically stronger Serbs: "This fear, which had a defensive character, gave rise to aggression that led to genocide against the Serbs in Croatia." Ibid., 4.
Krestić's work is replete with methodological errors, notably in the area of analogy. If the Croats acquired "genocidal ideas" via the Hungarian model of a "political people," which, nota bene, is no more peculiarly Hungarian than similar Jacobin attempts to absorb the minorities of France to French nationhood, why is it that Hungarians, too, did not develop equivalent "genocidal ideas"? Or is "genocide" a generic substitute for national imbalances and tensions of every kind?

[37]Josip Broz Tito, *Govori druga Tita* (Zagreb: NIP "Vjesnik," 1971), 27.

[38]Ibid., 32.

[39]Editors, "Mamula go home!" *Mladina* (Ljubljana) (12 February 1988): 1.

[40]Taras Kermauner, *Pisma srbskemu prijatelju* (Klagenfurt: Založba Drava, 1989), 146.

[41]These statements by Veljko Rus, originally published in the Ljubljana daily *Delo* (Labor), were cited in Milorad Vukelić, "Proroci mržnje," *Književne novine* (Belgrade) (1 September 1988), 1.

[42]Kermauner, 147.

[43]Dragoljub R. Živojinović and Dejan V. Lučić, eds., *Varvarstvo u ime Hristovo: Prilozi za Magnum Crimen* (Belgrade: Nova knjiga, 1988), 70, 511. The following could be cited among equivalent anti-Catholic publications that appeared at the same time: Hervé Laurier (pseud.), *Ubice u božje ime* (Belgrade: Filip Višnjić, 1987); Vladimir Dedijer, *Vatikan i Jasenovac: Dokumenti* (Belgrade: Rad, 1987); Milan Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida i sudjenje Andriji Artukoviću 1986, godine,* 2 vols. (Belgrade: Rad, 1988), esp. vol. 2, part 5.

[44]Živojinović, 74–75.

[45]*Književne novine* (Belgrade) (15 January 1990), 2.

[46]For an even-handed account of Stepinac's episcopate, especially the Ustaša period, see Stella Alexander, *The Triple Myth: A Life of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac* (Boulder, Colo.: East European Monographs, 1987).

[47]Milorad Ekmečić, "Budućnost Jugoslavije," *NIN* (Belgrade) (16 November 1990): 56, 59.

[48]Milić od Mačve (pseud. Milić Stanković), "Hrvatsko ludilo i Pandorina kutija," *Pogledi* (Kragujevac) (17 January 1992): 25.

[49]Petar Milatović-Ostroški, "Očistiti gubu iz torine!" *Srbija* (Belgrade) (9 August 1990): 29.

[50]Ratibor Djurdjević, "Kokoška u začaranom krugu (od krede)," *Beli orao* (Belgrade) (3)(1991): 8–9.

[51]*Književne novine* (Belgrade)(1 September 1990): 2.

[52]*Književne novine* (Belgrade) (1 April 1990):2.

[53]Vanja Bulić, "Biće sve u redu," *Duga* (Belgrade)(7 December 1991): 25.

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[54]Ferrero, 214.

[55]Milić Stanković, "Hrvatsko ludilo," 25. The cover of the Belgrade journal *Intervju* for 13 December 1991 carries the caricature of Genscher in the pose of Count Dracula, fangs and all. The same issue includes an interview with the novelist Milorad Pavić, who is quoted as saying, "I think that everything [that happened in Yugoslavia] got a start in Europe. That much is clear. I am therefore more worried about Europe than about Yugoslavia." Milorad Pavić, "Smrt suprostavljena večnosti," *Intervju* (Belgrade) (13 December 1991): 7.

[56]Ivan Djurić, "Tražit ću oproštaj od hrvatskog naroda," *Globus* (Zagreb) (15 November 1991): 46.

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Jiří Musil

Czechoslovakia in the Middle of Transition

MOST AUTHORS COMMENTING ON THE EVENTS in Central and Eastern Europe have arrived at the conclusion that the revolutions of 1989 had an epochal meaning, but at the same time lacked "the pathos of novelty," which, according to Hannah Arendt,[1] belongs to the essential feature of modern revolutions. In their opinion these were revolutions without a revolutionary theory, without a historical model, without new goals. In fact, the endeavor was to restore the ideals and claims of the Enlightenment, of the American and French revolutions, the rights of man and the citizen, and the sovereignty of the people. The political earthquake of 1989, which certainly changed the world, was labeled by Jurgen Habermas as a "rectifying revolution."[2] Alain Touraine considered it a movement of Central and East European societies toward a "normal situation from an abnormal one, which had been imposed on them,"[3] and François Furet, more radically, saw it as the end of a "long and tragic deviation which had begun in 1917."[4]

Besides this stress on the *return* to traditional liberal and democratic concepts and institutions, the second most frequently mentioned feature of the 1989 revolutions, in the view of many, was that they mark the *end* of socialism.

And so, if we leave aside historical subtleties and minor differences in interpretation, most of the serious observers agree that what happened in 1989 was the end of socialism and the restoration of liberalism and capitalism that will inevitably follow. A 150-year-old rivalry between the two main theories, both the products of industrial

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society, came to an abrupt end, despite the fact that for a long time—and very recently—it seemed that socialism represented the winning side. The long competition resulted in a surprising result—the rapid collapse of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union—all within a matter of two years.

Today, only two years after the revolutions began, there is less certainty that the collapse of socialism guarantees the restoration of liberalism. While the institutional structures and official ideologies, an integral part of the socialist ideocracies, have indeed disintegrated, in the whole former Soviet bloc, as well as in Yugoslavia and Albania, it is important to understand what has happened. The three pillars on which socialism stood have been removed: the constitutionally guaranteed leading role of the Communist Party in all spheres of life; central planning as the principal instrument for organizing economic life; the ideological monopoly of Marxism-Leninism. However, as attention begins to shift from analyses of the revolutions themselves to issues of the further development of postcommunist societies, the original equation—the defeat of socialism in its struggle with liberalism leading automatically and necessarily to the introduction of liberal-democratic regimes—appears as a dangerous oversimplification.

While statements on the death of socialism remain valid, those that deal with the rectification, restoration, and return to liberalism remain mere expressions of hopes. The probability of their realization differs substantially from one postcommunist country to the other. At the moment, there is no certainty that the postcommunist countries' development will be in the direction of a democratic model. To establish permanent democracies in these countries will require considerable long-term efforts, even where the internal and/or external conditions appear to favor such development. Postcommunist societies may evolve in any number of directions; some may deteriorate into new forms of nondemocratic, though not necessarily fascist, regimes; others may almost imperceptibly emerge as new types of authoritarian "quasi-democracies," regimes with strong governments or strong presidents, with dirigist economies, displaying

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populistic neonationalist features, accepting conservative forms of corporativism.

THE HERITAGE AND THE BARRIERS OF TRANSITION

In hardly any country of the Soviet bloc was the official doctrine after 1968 more devoid of ideas, more sterile and irrelevant for solving the important issues of society and state than in Czechoslovakia. Hardly any country in the bloc was so resistant to new ideas in economy, sociology, and political science. During the 1970s and 1980s in Czechoslovakia not a single book by a Western non-Marxist author dealing with serious, contemporary political or economic issues was published. While Polish, Hungarian, and even Soviet intellectuals were allowed to become acquainted with some of the main tendencies of thought in the outside world, their Czech and Slovak colleagues were deliberately barred from the international intellectual community. Not even the admirable ingenuous, persevering, and multiform *samizdat* efforts could overcome this gap. The results: ignorance and lack of information; more seriously, a gradual decay of analytic and theoretical thought and language. As a consequence of this deliberate "Biafra of the spirit," carried on by the Husák regime, even today important discussions of political, economic, and social issues in Czechoslovakia are descriptive and technical; they rarely penetrate into the deeper layers of the problems under discussion.

A second barrier to understanding the essence of the transformations in Czechoslovak society derive from the very nature and course of the 1989 "velvet revolution." A paradoxical side effect of the smooth, nonviolent takeover of power by the democratic forces, characterized by its attention to legal forms, was the creation of the illusion that the transformation of society from real socialism to democracy would be relatively easy. The nonviolence of the revolution probably caused individuals to underestimate the depth, difficulty, and time required for the transformation of a society. The situation of Czech and Slovak society may be compared to the situation after a war—a lost war—where the stability and continuity of daily life, the normal functioning of shops, services, and infrastructure, and the absence of destroyed or damaged buildings and networks distorted the radical nature of the metamorphosis, concealing the complexity of the interrelationships of political, economic,

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and sociocultural transformations. The leading personalities of the revolution, particularly Václav Havel, almost certainly realized within a very short time how intertwined all the changes were, how their very simultaneity created risks. After the first parliamentary elections in June 1990, large strata of the population began to be aware of the complexity of the transformations.

The task was nothing less than to reconstruct completely a whole society. To build it on the ruins of a system that sought unsuccessfully to combine certain elements of modernity with conservative ideas about the organization of society and an unprecedented centralization of power was no small challenge. The Soviet type of society, an attempt to create a huge, well-integrated, and harmonic *Gemeinschaft,* built on a kind of modern version of Durkheim's mechanical solidarity,[5] proved to be an aberration. This noncontractual, nonconflictual, but also noncooperative model determined both the economic and the political institutions of state socialist societies.[6] Central planning instead of a market economy, centralized and hierarchically organized power instead of decentralized and diffused political structures, ideocracy instead of competing plurality of ideas—these were the characteristic features of the societies of "real socialism," including the Czechoslovak variant, often labeled by their internal and external opponents as strongly bureaucratic. The critics had in mind the considerable power of the party and the state apparatus, the various kinds of rigidity, red tape, and avoidance of personal responsibility and decision making (passing the buck), which together created a system of nonaccountability by officials vis-à-vis the public.

In fact, however, if Max Weber's classic criteria are used, the properties of modern bureaucratic administration were absent in the socialist societies; they were not genuine *Rechtstaaten,* based on rationality and legality; they lacked the "principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas, which are generally ordered by the rules, that is by laws or administrative regulations." In many respects they resembled certain precapitalist societies: "In all these cases the ruler executes the most important measures through personal trustees, table companions or court servants. Their commission and authority are not precisely delimited and are temporarily called into being for each case."[7]

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Legal universalism, a clear delimitation of jurisdictional areas, and the application of legal norms were denied not only in the political sphere, but also in the economy, regional and local administrations, education, welfare institutions, and most other spheres. Personal contacts, nepotism, and ad hoc decisions governed. This resulted in a vague and nontransparent system of social relationships, combining semifeudal dependency of a hierarchic nature with horizontal local-power networks, often based on the exchange of services or scarce commodities. Central planning, the central redistributive system that had replaced the market, was supplemented by local redistributive systems. All this was made even more complicated by the growing role of an informal economy and black markets. Thus came into being a social system, the unintelligibility of which will keep sociologists and political scientists busy for a very long time.

Two generations—in the Soviet Union even more—were obliged to conform to this vague and nonrational system. To function in such a system required individuals to adopt cultural patterns that wholly repudiated many of the principles common in societies with liberal political institutions. Today, these interiorized patterns of behavior are probably the strongest barriers, certainly the most difficult to overcome, in all the postcommunist countries that seek to adopt the values of civil society.

In Czechoslovakia, the vagueness and nontransparency of social relationships, typical for all societies of real socialism, is further exacerbated by major discontinuities in Czech and Slovak history. During the twentieth century, nine different political regimes have governed in Czech territory. These regimes differed not only in their political form and content, but also in their concept of national and state identity. The consciousness of discontinuity—the longing for continuity, for more stable, solid frames—is an essential element of life in this part of Europe. Toward the end of the 1920s, T. G. Masaryk expressed the feeling admirably in a well-known remark to K. Čapek: "I think we need some twenty, thirty more years for safeguarding the republic. Afterwards, I am not afraid for it anymore. At that time a new generation will be here, born in freedom. Sure, that generation won't let anyone take the freedom away."[8] There can be no doubt that the event called "the velvet revolution" was "a rectifying revolution." The Czech republic consciously endeavored to

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return to the evolutionary trajectory of its modern history, which laid great stress on liberal democracy.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THREE GREAT TRANSFORMATIONS

The quick and complete collapse of the communist regimes in 1989 was due to the simultaneous disintegration of all their basic levels of decision making. Owing to their nature, to the strong interrelationship of their individual parts, the communist regimes probably could not have ended in any other way. Still, the surprising quickness of the collapse was, for a time at least, the source of collective euphoria. Its unexpected consequence was that all the postcommunist governments felt obliged, without the benefit of thorough discussions, of taking quick decisions in three crucial spheres which determine the nature of all political systems: the constitutional, the economic, and the sociocultural. These decisions were intended to create new regulatory systems that would replace, as soon as possible, those that were disappearing. In this situation the burden and risks of decision making were extraordinarily heavy, principally because no theory was available to guide in the transition from socialism to an open society.[9]

It was necessary to define and redefine the identity of the state, specifying the citizens' rights and obligations, deciding on the structure and rules of the representative democratic bodies, the administrative and regional structures of the state, and on scores of other issues defining the constitutional frame of a modern society. The old, disintegrating mechanisms of central planning had to be replaced by measures which would lead to a market economy. Principles had to be laid down for the difficult maneuvers incorrectly defined as economic reform, when in fact a total economic restructuring, of unprecedented extent and intensity, was required. A reliable social and cultural framework for these new societies had to be built—a framework that involved nothing less than the creation of a civil society. And all this had to be done in such a way as would preserve, indeed improve, daily life because a large part of the population took for granted that the revolutions of 1989 would bring not only freedom, but economic prosperity as well.

Although each of the transformations constituted in itself a difficult and complex operation, the success of the whole transition depended

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on the harmonization and sequencing of all the changes, not only in the individual spheres, but in the whole system. Claus Offe understood correctly that "there is no time for slow maturation, experience, and learning along the evolutionary scale of nation building, constitution making, and the politics of allocation and redistribution. And neither are there model cases which might be imitated nor, for that matter, a victorious power that would impose its will from the outside."[10]

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSTITUTIONAL TRANSITION

The developments in Czechoslovakia are almost a textbook example of the importance of timely settled basic constitutional agreements for the transformation of postcommunist societies. Indeed, economic reform and the establishment of democratic political institutions—of civil society itself—can be severely complicated, even blocked, if, at the beginning of the whole process, sufficient attention is not given the constitutional foundations of the state undergoing major restructuring. Such agreements, expressed in clear and concise legal form, must include the definition of national identity, of territorial, economic, and cultural borders. In this respect, the principal problem in Czechoslovakia has been the relationship between the Czech and Slovak republics. The relationship between two other macro-regions, Bohemia and Moravia, does not pose comparable dangers, though it too tends to divert attention and siphon off energy from economic reform and the building up of civil society.

The history of the relationship of Czechs and Slovaks, two nations of the Western Slavonic group, is too complex to be given in brief compass. Still, developments since 1968 need to be understood. In that year, a formerly near-unitarian state became a federation of two republics. This was the only realized and accepted outcome by the Soviet Union of the Prague Spring of 1968. The change improved Slovakia's status while at the same time weakening the political standing of the Czechs. An external but not negligible feature of the situation allowed a Slovak—Gustav Husák—to become president of the federal republic, and, more importantly, the leading man in the radically purged Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. An unusual constitutional system of an asymmetric sort was established, with the central federal government on the one hand and the government of

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the Slovak republic on the other. There was no Czech government; only a not very influential parliament, the Czech National Council. All important institutions were organized in a similarly asymmetric way. Moreover, the principle of parity was introduced in all federal institutions, though the Slovaks were only one-third of the federation's population. In the economic sphere, Slovakia's rapid industrialization continued after the Soviet invasion in 1968; that meant relatively higher investments in the Slovak republic than in the Czech regions. During the whole period between 1945 and the end of the 1980s, Slovakia registered an unusually rapid rate of industrialization and urbanization; differences between both parts of Czechoslovakia rapidly disappeared. For Slovakia, this was a period of great social change, with modernization, high mobility, and an obviously improved standard of living. The situation of the western part of the federation, principally Bohemia, was different: Bohemia changed from being a core area of Central Europe into becoming a periphery of the Soviet bloc on its westernmost borders. The western parts of Czechoslovakia decayed; population stagnated; the industrial structure became obsolete; the environment was damaged, and health conditions deteriorated.

In Slovakia, the Husák regime, slightly more liberal than in the Czech regions, managed a certain cultural development, at least institutionally, in the years 1969–1989. The latent political tension between the two parts of the federation was suppressed as much as possible by the Soviets themselves as well as by the local regime installed by the Soviets; still, tension existed under the surface.

During the 1989 revolution, Slovakia joined Prague in the movement toward democracy, and the common slogan, heard not only in large gatherings in the streets, but also in official political discourse, was "Strength in unity!"

In a relatively short time, however, in the first half of 1990, in the ideological vacuum accompanying the collapse of the communist *Supra-Gemeinschaft* and its ideology, the situation in Slovakia began to change. While a part of the population wished to cooperate as closely as possible with the Czechs, and would even have preferred a completely unitarian state to the federation, a growing number of Slovaks, though considering the federation as the most advantageous option, wished to change its form. They adopted the slogan of "authentic federation," and some gradually shifted to argue for

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confederalism. There emerged again on the political scene radical Slovak nationalists who wished to establish an independent Slovak state. Though internally divided, with some seeking to achieve independence by constitutional methods (represented by the KDH—the Christian Democratic Movement) and others willing to use nonconstitutional procedures as well, the Slovaks are obviously fragmented in terms of constitutional identity.[11]

The Slovak crisis has spread into the whole state. The heterogeneity of the political parties is reflected in the very different political attitudes in the Slovak population. According to representative social surveys made in the middle of 1991,[12] about 13 percent of the Slovak citizens support the establishment of an independent Slovak state. A unitarian state with the Czechs, with a single parliament, government, and constitution, is acceptable to 16 percent of the population. As compared with the situation at the end of 1990, the support for such a unitarian state has dropped by 6 percent. The preferred constitutional formula in Slovakia is for a dualistic federation of the Slovak and Czech republics, which enjoys the support of 33 percent of those polled. Some 14 percent of the Slovaks support a trialistic federation (that is, a state composed of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia), 11 percent a confederation, 6 percent the so-called Bundesstaat, and 2 percent other arrangements; 5 percent have not decided. Studies analyzing the development of Slovak public opinion in 1990 and 1991 point out the characteristic long-term predominance of supporters of different forms of a common state with the Czechs. However, their number has been slowly decreasing.

These data suggest that Slovak nationalism is rather confused and contradictory. Its motor certainly is the well-known conviction that without a state a nation is incomplete. In the Slovak case, the question is: what kind of state? The ambiguity is evident. Though public opinion polls show that a decisive majority (78 to 79 percent) of Slovak citizens stress the need for friendly links between the Slovaks and the Czechs, there is a growing feeling in the Slovak population that the Czechs do not treat them as equal partners, that in the federation, Slovakia has unequal status. A great part of the Slovak population also disagrees with the prevailing concept of economic reform, as worked out by the federal government. Generally, the Slovaks desire to suppress the power of federal institutions, to strengthen the authority of the national republics. This feature is

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crucially important. The Czechs identify themselves with Czechoslovakia, the Slovaks with the Slovak republic. A kind of Czech paternalism may lie hidden in this attitude. Most differences, however, are caused by the fact that in the building of the new state, Czech society in its majority prefers civic and individualistic principles; the Slovaks favor national and solidaristic ones.

Slovak nationalism, of a very specific nature, proves that any analysis of the new nationalisms emerging in the disintegrated Soviet bloc has to begin with a frank acknowledgment of their plurality. In addition to Ernest Gellner's well-known evolutionary typology,[13] it may be useful to keep in view the relationship of all nationalisms to two sociological variables: the degree of economic development of the nation or country; the power status of the individual nations within multinational states.[14] The Slovak situation differs considerably from that of Croatia, Ukraine, or Lithuania, for example. There, the nationalists never doubted that a referendum would bring them victory; they wanted it. In Slovakia, all the nationalistically oriented parties oppose a referendum to decide whether or not to preserve the common state; they fear that the majority would refuse to vote for an independent Slovak state. Thus, paradoxically, in the Czechoslovak situation, the senior partner offers the junior partner the possibility of a democratic choice, but the latter refuses to use it.

The Slovak crisis is beginning to be a destabilizing element in Central Europe; it can be resolved in one of three ways. It can end in the disintegration of the Czechoslovak state into two parts. Alternatively, a confederation could be established which risks being unstable. The most desirable solution is the creation of a functioning federation. To achieve that, however, will require considerable effort, much political tact and ingenuity, a bit of luck, and, above all, the willingness on both sides to compromise.

I have dealt at length with the relationship between the Czechs and Slovaks after the 1989 revolution to demonstrate how important it is, at the very beginning of the transformation of postcommunist societies, to create a clear and reliable constitutional frame, incorporated in the constitution itself. Without such a frame, economic restructuring and the building of a civil society becomes extremely complicated. Now, after the fact, it is easy to see that many problems that today impede the transition to a democratic society in Czechoslovakia could have been prevented, if, in the first phases of the

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transition, the acceptance of the Charter of Human Rights and certain other partial constitutional principles had been followed immediately by the working out of a constitution.

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Ralf Dahrendorf,[15] writing on the East European revolutions, described the economic transformation as a valley of tears. To pass through the valley will take several years. As compared with the transformation of the constitutional and political frame, or with the formation of civil society, economic transformation takes on the character of a battlefield.

If, on the one hand, we take for granted an almost universal acceptance of democratic principles by the Czech and Slovak society, acknowledging that basic democratic institutions have been installed, that free elections have been held, that human rights are being respected, and that gradually the new nonprofessional politicians are acquiring both experience and skills, the situation in the sphere of the economic transformation is very different. Apart from the problem of the relationship between the two republics, it is today the most controversial and complicated issue in the public life of the country. Economic transformation is a political issue par excellence; even its description—let alone its evaluation—is blurred by political and ideological views. Depending on their various political affiliations, commentators "see" only certain aspects of the complex process. There is yet another snag. The Czechoslovak economic reform began later than that of Poland and Hungary; it has been going on for only a year. That is too short a time for a reliable evaluation of its promise.

The program of economic transformation was inadequately called a "scenario of economic reform," though in fact it was a blueprint for radical restructuring. Reflecting the victory of neoliberal economists, the scenario was based on price liberalization, the freeing of foreign trade, the abandonment of a restrictive budgetary policy, but mainly on a radical change of ownership, privatization. As K. Kuehnel[16] has rightly observed, "The scenario is . . . a centrist compromise and gives enough space for critical comments from the consequent liberal point of view." The approved policy does not represent an extreme neoconservative strategy, as is sometimes suggested.

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There is a strict separation of the economic and social spheres, and with it the removal of what has been described as an "economy of indolence," in which state enterprises degenerated into social institutions. This explicit separation necessitates the introduction of a strong and relatively dense "social safety net." Part of such a net existed in the past; new parts have been added, concerned with such matters as unemployment, retraining, and homelessness.

After one year's trial, certain positive effects can be seen, among them: a relatively low inflation rate (hyperinflation, as in Poland or in the former Soviet Union, has been avoided); the growth of private savings in banks and savings banks; relative success with "small privatization," and the gradual liquidation of certain ineffective and ecologically harmful factories; a satisfactory consumer goods market; growing foreign trade with many hard-currency countries; a satisfactory balance of payment in foreign trade; the slow and moderate growth of foreign debt (among Central and East European countries, Czechoslovakia is still the one with the lowest foreign debt); and last, but not least, a balanced exchange rate for the Czechoslovak crown, a stable currency, the creation of conditions necessary for its future gradual revaluation.

Still, the transformation as currently administered and its consequences have been the subject of wide criticism—from the left as well as from the right. Left-wing critics suggest that the transformation is a heavy burden for many citizens. They refer not only to hardships caused by the policies, but to systemic shortcomings. The price increases, combined with a restrictive budgetary policy, lead to decreased demand for foodstuffs and industrial goods, but also to reduced investment. Expansion to foreign markets has not succeeded in ways originally hoped for. As a result, production is falling and unemployment is growing: the rate of unemployment is 4.5 percent in the Czech republic and 8.5 percent in the Slovak republic. In some of the latter's districts it approaches 20 percent. It is estimated that people have cut their food purchases by 10 to 20 percent, their expenditures for services by 25 percent, and their demand for industrial commodities by 33 percent. Real incomes are decreasing faster than calculated; according to some estimates, they dropped by a quarter or a third in 1991. Because privatization proceeds slower than expected, and because many state-owned enterprises survive, the abolished central planning has to be replaced by some kind of

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state regulation. The existence of an antiquated supermonopoly structure considerably modifies the reform process. Because so many of the monopolistic and state enterprises do not react properly to market stimuli, the costs of the reforms are borne less by firms than by consumers. The solution is thought to be the reduction of restrictive policies, the stimulation of demand.

Right-wing critics insist that "people's tolerance towards further economic decline is quickly dropping," and contrary to left wingers who advocate more state regulation, they warn that "there is a growing danger of economic *dirigism* which could again lead to various kinds of political totalitarianism."[17] To foster economic growth, the right wing demands, in addition to the implementation of the accepted scenario for reform, that certain mistakes and errors be acknowledged and removed. In its view, there is too little support for newly emerging small and medium-sized enterprises. The number of private enterprises remains too limited; under privatization, only one-tenth of the planned enterprises have come into being. Emphasis is given to the fearful attitude displayed by politicians, governments, and parliament with respect to foreign capital (an expression of combined socialist and nationalist aversion), but also the lack of support for the development of banking, fiscal, and legal institutions to make economic transactions easier, to guarantee rights, and give protection to the new economic subjects. Many critics argue also that in the transformation program, as well as in the real process to restore formerly nationalized property, there are constant collisions with privatization schemes.

Still, the impartial observer must acknowledge that the restructuring process goes on, has not yet become "shock therapy," that social peace is maintained, thanks in part to certain neocorporativist features, which borrow from older Czechoslovak traditions of the interwar period. Paradoxically, social peace is kept also because of memories of the revolutionary situation of yesterday. The economic transformation, leading through a valley of tears, is today legitimated by the fact that it is part of the democratic revolution, the awareness that the earlier system produced neither results nor perspectives. People are prepared to accept change, believing that there is no other way to prosperity than to integrate Czechoslovakia into Europe. Having rationally accepted a rational explanation and thanks to a

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relatively good standard of living, there is still room to retreat, to believe in a better tomorrow.

Still, the impartial observer must recognize the problems and the risks. The social situation is deteriorating; the living standard is dropping precariously, to an extent greater than expected; the pace of privatization is slow; the interest of foreign capital in Czechoslovakia, because of constitutional uncertainties and for other reasons as well, is not as keen as was hoped for; Czechoslovak firms are finding greater difficulties in penetrating foreign markets than they had anticipated; the building of financial and commercial infrastructures lags behind the nation's needs.

Too little attention is given to the fact that the political and economic restructuring of postcommunist societies are stimulated or arrested in great part by accepted and practiced values. Every major change requires the mobilization of either inner resources or substantial external support. A large change can be realized when a group of devoted leaders, even accepting the use of coercion, bring the masses into the promised land. Alternatively, people may choose to interiorize their determination to achieve change, and united by an idea and inner discipline, accept the necessity of personal sacrifice. European capitalism in its beginnings presupposed the existence of what was then called "inner-worldly asceticism,"[18] which postponed consumption and dictated purposeful economy. That ethos helped create modern European and American capitalism; also, liberal society. In a recent discussion, a Czech intellectual used the expression "Through poverty to affluence," which has some resonance for those acquainted with Puritan philosophy. The most perfect and best-elaborated scenarios of economic restructuring which do not take into account some motivation for personal sacrifice, some kinds of new restraint, are likely to fail.

Amidst a consumption-oriented and consumption-starved society, it would be unrealistic to expect such a motivation to be drawn from principles summed up as the "Protestant ethic." Still, the willingness to pass through the valley of tears has to lean on some support, be stimulated by something; even if it be pragmatic and worldly interests, it must express a hope. The expectation that the society will overcome and in a not-too-remote future reach some level of

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affluence, becoming again a part of Europe, is what may in the end sustain it.

TRANSITION TO CIVIL SOCIETY

The most difficult part of the transformation will be the building of a civil society. The concept of civil society has been used in many contexts; its meaning has changed over time. Very often it is understood simply to mean a social organization of life, introduced by the bourgeoisie, fought for in the revolutions of the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. Sometimes, it suggests the opposite of anarchy, or, alternatively, a society not dominated by the Church. Many understand civil society to be an organization of social life in which society is separated from the state and has an autonomous existence. In this latter meaning, the concept was used as an instrument of resistance by dissidents in their fight against the communist state; it has become part of all the newly emerging democratic movements. To implement it, a rich network of independent institutions and organizations has to be formed, that are neither state-directed nor state-controlled, that are autonomous social, political, and cultural entities. For that purpose, it is indispensable to break the *Supra-Gemeinschaft,* the idea of an organic merger of society and state into a kind of fully integrated and centrally directed Big *Kombinat.*[19]

Experience has suggested that the prerequisites for breaking down the *Supra-Gemeinschaft* are three: institutional changes, changes in the structure and status of specific social actors, changes in cultural and behavioral patterns. In Western literature, discussions of the matter lay stress on the institutional level, assuming that when the plurality and independence of political and economic institutions are introduced, with a rich network of associations and voluntary organizations formed, the problem will almost automatically be solved. One of the important experiences acquired during the years since the 1989 revolution suggests that the institutional basis, while indispensable, is by no means a sufficient condition for creating a genuinely robust civil society. The institutional conditions of civil society must of course be legally guaranteed and organizationally worked out as soon as possible. In this respect, models from Western countries can indeed be adopted. Such measures, however, must be

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followed by the considerably more complex process of forming a plurality of actors. In democratic societies, the basis of such plurality, as Alain Touraine has expressed it,[20] must be the relationships between the actors themselves, and not only the actors' relationships to the whole society. In other words, the important thing is to achieve genuine social independence. Seeking and constituting such social, cultural, political forces, capable of attaining such independence and balance, is the process which will decide whether a postcommunist regime is successful in its efforts to achieve democracy. This process cannot include only those who represent powerful economic interests. In all postcommunist societies the transformation will succeed only if a rich network of local, regional, religious, professional, interest, age, and other groups and organizations comes into being. This, however, will be a more complex process, and will require a longer time than the setting up of specific institutional conditions.

Even that, however, will not guarantee the viability of civil society. A deep-rooted inertia vis-à-vis the changes initiated by the 1989 revolutions in the cultural sphere persists. Institutions, laws, rulers, and actors may be changed, but cultural and behavior patterns which took tens of years to form are likely to survive. This is precisely the situation of the new democracies in Central Europe. The actors functioning today in their democratic institutions are often individuals with old views and habits, showing value orientations formed in the past, trying to cope with a confused syncretic system of values;[21] one can find among them all the so-called old structures; many are former members of the communist *nomenklatura*.

Let us glance at Czechoslovakia. While new independent professional, interest, and cultural associations, foundations, and charitable organizations have begun to emerge, and while new laws encourage the revival of local self-government—an institution which has, principally in the Czech republic, a tradition dating from the nineteenth century—this is not all. Unions of towns and communities, of whole economic regions, have grown up almost spontaneously. So, also, political movements and parties grow like mushrooms; in 1991, their number was about eighty. By any number of indices, institutional plurality is spreading rapidly, in part as a reaction against the centralism and state control of all social and cultural activities characteristic of the past.

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The more concrete and narrow are the interests of these new social subjects, the easier is the emergence of new institutional units to represent those interests. The situation of large and more heterogeneous social subjects is much more complicated. One of the historically unusual features of the transformation is that large collective subjects, as, for example, certain social strata—entrepreneurs, tradesmen, and the like—come into being thanks to specific political acts and decisions. This may be described as the shaping of democracy and capitalism, even of their actors, by political design, political mechanisms. In the past, it was almost always the other way around: political institutions and new mechanisms were formed by revolutions, resulted from the pressures exercised by stable collective actors expressing their specific interests.

Among the least surmountable barriers to the creation of a civil society in most postcommunist countries are the inherited systems of values, which a group of Czech sociologists have succinctly described:

1. Society should not be overly differentiated; people's living standards ought to be as equal as possible.
2. Everyone must work, regardless of whether one's work is meaningful or productive.
3. State institutions know best how to satisfy people's needs; people need not care excessively for themselves.
4. The living standard need not be high, provided it is secure.[22]

After 1989 this structure of values began to waver, but inertia guaranteed its survival. While individuals often "add" new active value orientations to the old ones, hoping to combine them, this only causes discrepancies, often in their own minds, but also between various categories of the population and various parts of the state. Many of the inconsistencies are to be found in the general acceptance of the principles of economic transformation and the failure to accept and agree on concrete economic measures. So, for example, according to a Czechoslovak social survey, while 38 percent of the citizens wish for the state to guarantee fully and to finance a satisfactory living standard for everyone, another 41 percent asked for that only partially, with only 21 percent having sufficient self-confidence to be willing to assume total responsibility for their own living standards. Between 40 and 46 percent of the respondents requested full state

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responsibility for employment; 47 percent expected the state to provide and finance at least simple basic housing; only 22 percent were willing to assume responsibility in this regard. As to health care, 84 percent of Czechoslovak citizens thought in 1990 that the state should provide and finance it totally. That high proportion, it must be said, has since decreased.

Inconsistent and conflicting attitudes can be found in other spheres as well. The overwhelming majority of respondents express support for liberal democratic values, including tolerance, but a 1990 sociological study suggests that 75 percent of all respondents do not care to live in the neighborhood of Gypsies, 60 percent refuse to be neighbors of homosexuals, and 50 percent reject Arab neighbors. The deep impact of the earlier experience of fear, suspicion, and intolerance—integral to all totalitarian societies—on the population is evident when one compares the level of trust among people in Czechoslovakia with that of certain Western countries.[23] The comparison is important, since it becomes increasingly evident that trust is an absolutely necessary cultural prerequisite of democracy. In the Netherlands, Great Britain, Belgium, and Luxembourg 88 to 90 percent of respondents stated that "people can be trusted"; in Czechoslovakia, the number was only 30 percent. To heal so serious a social disease will not be easy; it will require time and patience.

EVALUATION OF TRANSITION AND WESTERN HELP

What, then, is the situation in Czechoslovakia two years after "the velvet revolution"? In the political sphere progress can be observed; the country is returning to its democratic traditions. However, the political changes are accompanied by a deep crisis in the constitutional foundations of the state. The crisis is made more acute because the consequences of the economic reform affect Slovakia more adversely than the Czech part of the state. In Slovakia today, a growing number are dissatisfied with the postrevolutionary developments.

The economic transformation, entering into its decisive phase, has brought a decline in production and consumption while maintaining macroeconomic stability and social peace. The transformation, proceeding in accordance with set principles, is sometimes criticized for its excessive speed; others dwell on its slowness. It is often pragmat-

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ically supplemented with measures to "soften" it. If the political support, which it retains above all in the Czech republic, is maintained, and if, with the help of tripartite agreements and newly emerging social support institutions, the country succeeds in keeping social peace, Czechoslovakia's economic restructuring will be successful. The success depends to a large extent on preventing an excessive decline in the living standard.

A hard struggle is going on to change people's inherited passive attitudes into active and responsible ones. This inner transformation is complicated by the fact that hopes for a rapid improvement of living standards, environment, and social infrastructure are fading. Without some new form of "inner-worldly asceticism" it is unlikely that material and other resources can be mobilized to transform Czechoslovak society. In this materialist world there are severe limits to any programmed puritanism, especially if we take into consideration that this society is exhausted by the experiment that utopians of the twentieth century have practiced on its body for over forty years. In its struggle for survival, the role that the Western countries can play is increasingly important. Without a fair amount of material and spiritual help from the West, the young Czechoslovak democracy will again be threatened. There is not much time left.

ENDNOTES

[1]For a review of statements stressing the absence of novelty in the 1989 revolutions, see the excellent study by Krishan Kumar, *The Revolutions of 1989: Socialism, Capitalism, and Democracy* (Kent: University of Kent, 1991). Kumar's paper was delivered in the course on postcommunist societies at the Central European University in Prague in 1991.

[2]The term was used by Jürgen Habermas for the title of his book *Die nachholende Revolution* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1990).

[3]See Alain Touraine, "Zrod postkomunistických spoločností" (The Birth of Postcommunist Societies) in the Slovak journal *Sociológia* 23 (4) (1990): 301–18.

[4]François Furet is quoted in the Czech edition of Ralf Dahrendorf, *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1990), 28.

[5]The term *Gemeinschaft* is used here in the original Ferdinand Tönnies meaning as expressed in his classic study *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Leipzig, 1887). The term *Gemeinschaft* stresses the "natural," solidaristic community bonds as opposed to contractual ones. What is meant by the term *Durkheim's mechanical solidarity* is solidarity based on likeness and not on division of labor.

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[6]Most countries of the Soviet bloc have been correctly described by David Lane as "state socialism societies." See David Lane, *The Socialist Industrial State: Towards a Political Sociology of State Socialism* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976).

[7]The quotation is taken from H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber, Essays in Sociology* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1947), 196–97.

[8]See Karel Čapek, *Čtení o TGM* (Prague: Melantrich, 1969), 18.

[9]The idea of analyzing the Czechoslovak transformation with respect to three regulatory systems was stimulated by Claus Offe's study *Capitalism by Democratic Design? Democratic Theory Facing the Triple Transition in East Central Europe,* a paper presented at IPSA Congress, Buenos Aires, July 1991. Ralf Dahrendorf, in *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe,* writes about "three parallel processes which must develop on the road to freedom." Dahrendorf stresses the formation of civil society as the third process, while Offe stresses the interaction of the incongruent changes proceeding in the global transformation.

[10]See Offe, 10.

[11]This feeling is shared by many Slovak politicians. Recently the vice-president of the Slovak National council, Ivan Čarnogursky, expressed it in the following way: "Slovakia had no problems with the Czechs nor with Europe but with itself." Quoted from *Lidove Noviny,* 3 January 1992.

[12]See the results of the survey *Aktuálné problémy slovenskej spoločnosti* (Topical Problems of Slovak Society), (Bratislava: Institute for Social Analysis, Comenius University, 1991).

[13]See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 88–109.

[14]The possibility of employing these two dimensions for a typology of nationalisms was used by the author in an unpublished paper for the UNESCO conference "Europe in Transition: A Challenge for the Social Sciences," Santander, Spain, 24–28 June 1991.

[15]See Darendorf, the Czech edition of *Reflections,* 85.

[16]Karel Kuehnel, "Prvních tři sta dní" (The First Three Hundred Days) in the Czech journal *Svědectví* 23 (1990): 27–40.

[17]From the statement of independent economists recently published in *Lidové Noviny,* 31 December 1991.

[18]The term was introduced to social sciences by Max Weber in his studies on Protestant ethics. See especially Max Weber, "Die Berufsethik des Asketischen Protestantismus" (The Professional Ethics of Ascetic Protestantism) in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie,* vol. 1 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, Paul Siebeck, 1920).

[19]The term *Kombinat* for the description of the Soviet-type societies was used in Ernest Gellner, "Civil Society in Historical Context," *International Social Science Journal* 43 (129) (1991): 495–510.

[20]See Touraine, 312.

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[21]One of the best studies on value syncretism is Elemér Hankiss, "In Search of a Paradigm," *Dædalus* 119 (1) (1990): 183–214.

[22]See the summary of a social survey performed in the Czech city Brno by Petr Mareš, Libor Musil, Ladislav Rabušic, "Sociální změna očima české veřejnosti" (Social Change in the Eyes of the Czech Public), *Sociologický Časopis* 27 (6) (1991): 702–14.The concrete data demonstrating the inconsistencies in the values of the Czech population are based on the social survey by Marek Boguszak and Vladimír Rak, "Československo-květen 1990," (AISA, 1990).

[23]The data on West European countries are based on studies carried out by R. Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); data on the Czech population are based on the survey summarized by Mareš, Musil, and Rabušic, 709.

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Now that an immediate peril is not plainly visible, there is a natural tendency to relax and to return to business as usual, politics as usual, pleasure as usual. Many of our people have become indifferent to what I might term the long-time dangers to the nation's security. It is natural and necessary, that there should be a relaxation of wartime tensions. But I feel that we are seriously failing in our attitude toward the international problems whose solution will largely determine our future. The public appears generally in the attitude of a spectator—interested, yes, but, whose serious thinking is directed to local, immediate matters. Spectators of life are not those who will retain their liberties nor are they likely to contribute to their country's security. . .

We have had a cessation of hostilities, but we have no genuine peace. Here at home we are in a state of transition between a war and peace economy. In Europe and Asia fear and famine still prevail. Power relationships are in a state of flux. Order has yet to be brought out of confusion. Peace has yet to be secured. And how this is accomplished will depend very much upon the American people.

General George C. Marshall
Remarks made at Princeton University on Washington's Birthday, 1947

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Erazim Kohák

Ashes, Ashes . . . Central Europe after Forty Years

WHEN THE BERLIN WALL CAME TUMBLING DOWN, it brought down with it the ideological façade which had long concealed social reality east of the Elbe from public view. Now forty years of political practice lie bare before us and what has happened is clear: while the West has integrated, the East has disintegrated.

The West has integrated. Except for local anachronisms like Northern Ireland, Western Europe today is overwhelmingly committed to cooperative and nonviolent conflict resolution. Though parliamentarians may grumble about the *f*-word, the idea of European federalism has won broad popular acceptance. Over the past forty years, West Europeans have at last outgrown the habits of adolescent contention and have reached the kind of political maturity that has made Switzerland the envy of Europe.

In that respect, the lands of the former Soviet empire have not been so much lagging behind as heading in the opposite direction. The past two years have revealed a marked decrease in tolerance and in willingness to seek noncoercive adjustments together with a corresponding rise in contentiousness and in absolute "nonnegotiable" demands. The nations of Yugoslavia have abandoned any attempt at a negotiated settlement and press their absolute claims by force of arms at a grievous human and material cost. In Slovakia, the audience drove out President Václav Havel with a shower of rotten eggs before he could make his appeal for tolerance and goodwill. Instead, the Slovaks have unveiled a memorial to their wartime

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führer, Hitler's ally who sent Slovak soldiers into battle alongside the Nazis and Slovak Jews to Auschwitz. Poland's Solidarity, once a symbol of Polish political maturity, has fragmented into some two dozen contentious minimovements unwilling to compromise even enough to form a government. President Walesa will not shake hands with President Landsbergis: Poland and Lithuania both claim the Lithuanian capital Vilnius and think that a matter of confrontation, not for negotiation. Throughout the region, lines are hardening and confrontations intensifying both among and within nations while any willingness to compromise and to seek optimal solutions is fading. While the West integrates, in the East the texture of peaceful coexistence disintegrates.

For the lovers of conspiracy theories, who are a legion in the paranoid world of post-Soviet Europe, there is a whole range of explanations to choose from. The earlier ones tended to blame the KGB or the CIA or perhaps the two in collusion. More recent theories tend to blame Germany, the new regional superpower. After all, fifty years ago Germany carved up Yugoslavia into three client states, annexed one half of Czechoslovakia and set up a puppet state in the other half, and imposed a faceless regime on occupied Poland. Perhaps the BND, Germany's secret service, is behind our travails, destabilizing the East to enhance German power. It may be far-fetched, but the fact that such paranoidal delusions can receive a serious hearing suggests something about the state of Central Europe after four decades of communism.

More realistic explanations tend to point to the problem of finding leaders after forty years of systematic discrimination. The fact is that in Central Europe today the morally pure are hopelessly inexpert and inexperienced while the expert and the experienced are morally tainted by collaboration with the old regime. Inevitably so: collaboration was the price of access to expertise and experience, while manual labor or prison was the price paid for moral purity. Central Europe badly needed a decade of gradual democratization to enable the dissidents to reenter public life and to gain the needed expertise and experience. Instead, the transfer of power took place in a few breathless days, leaving the country in disarray.

There is a great deal to that explanation. Visitors from abroad, whose contact is largely with officials old and new, are constantly running into that problem and, for that matter, so are we. However,

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living and working in Czechoslovakia day after day, we cannot help but note another reality. What stands most in our way are not dark and hidden forces, if indeed there are such. It is not our leaders, not all of whom are either incompetent or corrupt by any means. Ultimately, it is we ourselves and what we have become during the forty years of communist rule—the habits, skills, and attitudes which were adaptive and appropriate to surviving under imposed rule but which have become hopelessly maladaptive now that we have become our own masters.

In effect, during the four decades of Soviet domination Central Europe went through a process of adaptation rather like that familiar in penal practice. When first imprisoned, humans tend to refuse to acknowledge their new condition. Though in prison, they refuse to think, act, and respond like prisoners. Instead, they cling to the habits and attitudes of freedom. Only gradually does reality set in and with it a stage of waiting and hoping. If the prisoners are released during this stage, they often return to ordinary life stronger and wiser for their experience. If, however, the imprisonment lasts, prisoners tend to adapt to their condition, acquiring new skills, attitudes, and habits likely to enhance their chances of survival. They become jail smart, able to resist the system and to derive from it such benefits as it has to offer. What they tend to lose is the ability to function as free humans.

That is the development through which the nations of Central Europe passed in the forty years of Soviet domination. Certainly there were courageous individuals who defied the pattern, and certainly the timetable differed in various countries, but the overall development went from defiance to adaptation. In Czechoslovakia, the first phase was the time of Milada Horáková, of prison camps and executions. We refused to admit that the Communists were then in power and that their rule was likely to last. It was a time of defiance.

The mood changed drastically in the mid-1950s after the Hungarian uprising. When the West did not move while the Soviet army did, ruthlessly and effectively, we had to accept the reality. The years that followed were a time of introspection, of waiting and hoping, which culminated in the late 1960s in Alexander Dubček and his socialism with a human face.

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Had the Soviet domination ended then, we might well have emerged stronger for our encounter with communism, better able to build a free and just society. We were ready to do so: we had had our experience with despotism, but our habits and attitudes were still those of free humans. Instead, the Soviet occupation in August 1968 ushered in another twenty years of despotism, this time with no illusion that the regime might grow milder or that its rule might end. Karel Kryl, the poet of the resistance, sang that "*tato noc nebude krátká*" (this will not be a short night), and we knew he was right.

Some, a handful, still resisted—the dissidents, refusing to compromise, refusing to be silenced, accepting harassment and imprisonment to bear their witness. Though in bondage, they still were free. Many others continued hoping. The vast majority, though, set about living the only way they could—under communist rule. After all, we have the example of the good soldier Švejk. As a nation, we became jail smart, learning the skills and attitudes adaptive under oppression. We learned to deceive our rulers without provoking them. We learned to avoid work and conflict. We learned to wear masks. In time, for most of us, life became fairly tolerable. By the time the communist regime collapsed, we had learned to live with it.

Perhaps the best way to understand the situation in Central Europe today is to examine the habits, skills, and attitudes that were adaptive during the years of communist rule. Perhaps the most important of these is anonymity—the absence of any distinctive, forceful personal identity, the avoidance of any initiative, of any decision, any responsibility. For surviving under oppression, a low profile is ideal. In a community of free persons, just the opposite is called for: a free person is one who takes initiative and accepts responsibility. In a community of free persons, it would be difficult to imagine a group of workers watching passively while the rain soaked bags of long-awaited cement stacked two feet from a shelter. During the communist years, that scene was commonplace and acted out repeatedly on all levels, from construction sites to governmental ministries. It would be maladaptive to take initiative.

In fact, the communist regime did for decades insist on a total monopoly of initiative. Any spontaneous act, any act not initiated by the regime, was treated as suspect: who put him up to it? Even shouting "With the Soviet Union forever!" without being instructed to do so could mean trouble. Like all despots, the Communists simply

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did not understand the category of a free, spontaneous act. They assumed that any act must be ordered by someone, that there must be someone behind it—and that if it were not they, it must be their enemies. Consistent with that perception, the regime rewarded obedience, mistrusted and punished initiative.

Under those conditions, the adaptive strategy is necessarily one of low profile, avoiding initiative, avoiding responsibility, avoiding standing out in any way. Even picking up windblown trash before the house is unwise: it makes one stand out. So is refusing to sign a petition—or volunteering to sign it. The wise strategy is to sign it when instructed to do so. Holding an opinion is equally unwise. The adaptive strategy is to think nothing until told, then agreeing, though not too vehemently. Given such a conditioning, it is hardly surprising that there are no well-profiled movements in the postcommunist world, only innumerable indistinct miniparties.

Promising, too, is an adaptive strategy, though promise keeping is not. To agree to whatever one is asked brings immediate goodwill in any situation. Keeping such a promise, though, becomes maladaptive: it means reacting to a past situation rather than to a new condition. Humans conditioned by bondage will readily agree to anything, will promise anything, but they will rarely keep the promise unless such a course is advantageous in the new situation. Outsiders coming to the postcommunist world start out enthusiastic: people were so cooperative, they agreed to anything. Soon newcomers would end up utterly frustrated as they discovered that promises imply no intention of actually doing something. They are just an unfree person's short-term adaptive skill.

No, it does not bother an unfree person's conscience. The very idea of a conscience belongs to a different universe of discourse, to the world of the free who take initiative, make decisions, accept responsibility. A conscience is a trait of the self, of the identity pole of action, decision, and responsibility, which is the mark of a free person. For the unfree, a self is a luxury they cannot afford, a potential source of conflict and thus maladaptive. The only adaptive strategy is total flexibility in fitting into a context. Self-respect, self-discipline, the very idea of a *self* has no place here.

In many ways, the well-adapted subject in the world of "real socialism" comes close to acting out what Martin Heidegger described as *das 'man'*, the anonymous presence drifting through life,

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governed by nothing but considerations of immediate advantage. Beneath the façade of slogans about the new socialist man, the world of communism was a world without subjects, without initiative, without decisions, without responsibility. Two years later, that world is still there: the "revolution" removed the mask; it did not change the reality.

A second trait of the real socialist society remains as well—the marked absence of any distinction between illusion and reality, between fantasy and truth, between "for real" and "just pretendin'." I shall long remember a countryman of mine watching the news of the pope's assassination on television. "Probably the KGB did it," he reacted. "Or maybe the CIA." And, upon brief reflection, "Probably he wasn't shot at all—they just staged it."

The reaction is typical and not all that unreasonable. For twenty years, erasing the distinction between illusion and reality, between a lie and the truth, was an essential survival skill. To keep a job, to get an apartment, even just to live, Slovaks and Czechs had to sign a declaration supporting the "fraternal aid" of August 21, 1968. We all knew it was a lie: we all remembered the euphoria of the Dubček spring, the heartbreak of the Soviet occupation, the desperate attempt to resist, the Communist Party's moment of glory when it led that resistance. No one could actually believe what we were being asked to sign—and yet, except for a minute handful of the heroic, all signed it.

And not just that. Everything we repeated was a lie, and we knew it. We were painfully aware of the shabbiness of our daily life, but we repeated phrases about living more abundantly. We knew that social care was much more adequate in neighboring Austria, yet we repeated phrases about the achievements of socialism, like Havel's grocer calling on the workers of the world to unite. Make-believe became the rule. In the factories, the joke went, "We pretend to work and they pretend to pay us"—and it was no joke. At scholarly conferences, speaker after speaker would drone pompous trivia cribbed from some Western journal, pretending to be a scholar, while the audience dozed off and pretended to be interested. The entire world of "real socialism" was one vast Potemkin village.

Yet the need for truth is probably the most fundamental human need. Humans need to believe. Sadly deficient in instincts, humans must choose consciously, and their ability to do so with confidence depends directly on a reliable assessment of the situation wherein

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they choose. A lie makes everything precarious. Humans forced to lie find themselves in an impossible situation. One way out is to refuse to lie, to insist on living in truth, but the price for that was high—it cost Václav Havel four years in prison. The other way is to force oneself to believe, but the price of that was an equivalent of prefrontal lobotomy. The lie was just too blatant.

Since most humans are neither heroes nor imbeciles, most chose a different way out, simply erasing the distinction between the truth and a lie, between "for real" and "just pretendin'." A factory manager, seeing the collapse around him yet reporting inflated production figures to assure premiums for his factory, could not believe, but neither could he just lie. Instead, he would refuse to acknowledge the distinction. The world of "real socialism" came to resemble nothing so much as a Platonic cave where vague images flitter indistinctly across the screen, where nothing is real, nothing illusory, where all is just a part of the never-ending story. Perhaps there are and perhaps there are not prison camps in Siberia, perhaps in the United States they do or perhaps they do not lynch blacks, and perhaps there is a difference and perhaps there is not. . . . Perhaps the production figures describe our performance or perhaps they describe our need for premiums. Ultimately, it does not matter whether we are for real or just pretending: it is all just part of the story.

The regime that built the Potemkin villages quietly faded away, but the villages still stand. The refusal to distinguish between appearance and reality has for so long been an adaptive trait that it cannot just vanish simply because power has passed into different hands. Though there is no one to deceive, deception has become a habit. In the name of rebuilding we build new Potemkin villages. There is no more emperor; it is we who have no clothes. We still do not admit it, but we are feeling the chill.

Perhaps the greatest handicap of postcommunist societies, though, may well be a third trait adaptive under communism—total skepticism. Precisely because they paid lip service to all the West's noble causes, the Communists managed to discredit almost totally any idealism, any transcending ideal, any legitimating vision. It was all a fraud. After forty years of that, the only thing we are prepared to trust as genuine is the quest for individual affluence.

The absence of a legitimating vision may ultimately prove the greatest obstacle to building viable societies in the lands of the

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erstwhile Soviet empire. A free society—basically, noncoercive coexistence—is in the last instance possible only when individual humans are willing voluntarily to limit their demands for the sake of the commonweal. It is possible only where humans are prepared to accept authority as legitimate, not simply because it can coerce but because they perceive it as a bearer of a vision they share. Without that recognition, as Thomas Hobbes recognized, society becomes a war of all against all and human life therein nasty, short, and brutish.

In traditional societies, such voluntary compliance is not a problem. The commonweal—the family, the tribe, the kingdom—is so much an unquestioned presence that its demands need no legitimation. A Navajo would no more question the legitimacy of his elders than a Swiss would that of the *Eidgenossenschaft*. A traditional regime can claim and receive the allegiance of its subjects simply because it is. When Václav Havel calls for a "civic society," he is calling for such a deeply ingrained willingness to coexist.

Revolutionary regimes, however, are ones which reject traditional allegiance and legitimacy in the name of a putatively higher ideal. They must legitimate their demands for allegiance, claiming it in the name of the ideals for which they stand, in the name of the vision they hold out and their subjects accept as their own. Modern European regimes—and most emphatically Central European ones—have long been basically revolutionary ones. Certainly, given a long enough period of undisturbed functioning, a revolution can become a tradition, as it has in Switzerland. Masaryk thought Czechoslovakia would need fifty years to achieve that. No Central European regime has had anything like that. Their legitimacy depends on a legitimating vision—and that is what communism discredited.

Throughout Europe, the legitimating vision since the French Revolution had been an Enlightenment vision of "progress" vaguely understood as a mixture of a collective striving toward greater social justice, toward greater "Rights of Man," and toward greater material affluence for all. While the medieval peasant yielded his tithes to the church and the lord because he perceived that as their divinely ordered due, the citizens of modern states pay their taxes and accept restrictions for the sake of building a better tomorrow—because they share a vision.

What made communism so destructive is that it championed all the right causes and turned them into mockery. Václav Havel

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analyzes the phenomenon in his *Anatomy of a Reticence* on the example of the women's movement. Gender discrimination in Central Europe is crude and blatant, yet most Czech women respond to any women's rights initiative with angry hostility. For so long, women's rights were an official cause. High-ranking officials, often male, enjoyed junkets abroad at public expense as representatives of Czechoslovak women while the women they ostensibly represented toiled mutely as unpaid domestics and cheap factory labor. The International Day of Women was an official holiday: men spent it drinking beer while women caught up on their housework. The peace movement worked the same way. It was strictly government initiated and government directed, duly protesting Western armaments—and providing very nice perks and freebies for a select few Party favorites. The cynicism of the average Czech on the topic of the peace movement is chilling.

The communist government championed social justice and human rights no less destructively. For years we were told that we must accept the weary shabbiness of our lives and the petty tyranny of the Party in the name of social justice, yet what we saw around us was anything but that. At the height of Stalin's purges, a Soviet song said of the Soviet Union that "I know of no land where humans breathe so freely." We were taught to sing it in a Czech translation. The mass media spoke of "progress" while the only increase we saw was the increase in pollution and in dying forests.

The cumulative effect has been to discredit the legitimating vision of freedom and social justice together with all idealism and with all altruism as a fraud and a deception. For years, that was the way it was and that was the safe, adaptive assumption. It is not surprising that Central Europeans today respond to the idealism of their new rulers with skepticism, treating it as make-believe which calls for no personal initiative on their part. That is how we have been conditioned to react.

With the triple handicap of deep-rooted traits adaptive in bondage and destructive in freedom, the postcommunist societies of Central Europe are acting out the Caliban dilemma, longing for freedom and ill equipped to sustain it. Lifelong bondage fosters in Caliban a powerful aversion to all authority. It is not really a love of freedom: Caliban has no idea of what freedom is and might well find the responsibility of it terrifying. It is simply a powerful aversion to any

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and all authority, whether arbitrary or democratic, whether tyrannical or democratic, whether arbitrary or benign. Freedom, hey-day, freedom!

Yet the habits of bondage make Caliban directly dependent on the authority he rejects. Caliban's song proclaims it: "Ban, ban, Caliban has a new master, get a new man! Freedom, hey-day, freedom!" In the absence of initiative and responsibility on the part of the citizenry, in the absence of any reliable reality testing, in the absence of any legitimating vision that could order priorities, not even the most elementary needs can be met by spontaneous cooperation and mutual consideration. Power is needed—and unacceptable. Revolutionary Russia at the end of the First World War offers a sneak preview of the likely development. Angry and vulnerable to demagogues, the frustrated populace will bring down one government after another, each weaker and more apologetic than its predecessor, until a government of a strong hand, riding primitive tribal passions, will come to appear not as a tyrant but as a savior. Perhaps it will be both. For a people who cannot rule themselves, a tyrant may well be the only savior possible.

While the West integrates, the East disintegrates. Can that disintegration be arrested and reversed, or must it run its bitter course until complete breakdown, as it did in Germany and Austria in the first half of the century and as it seems to be doing in Yugoslavia today? The prospects are not good. Social reintegration requires first of all goodwill, a willingness to reach out to others in understanding and to work for a compromise that would achieve the optimal adjustment for all concerned. The mood in Central Europe today is not that. It is a mood of absolute demands and of righteous wrath. Most of all, it is a mood of frustration and anger, of deep and bitter anger seeking an excuse to vent itself.

In part, that anger is the legacy of four decades of humiliation, harassment, and injustice which allowed no protest. For four decades, we could only grit our teeth and accept the unacceptable in silence. Now that accumulated anger can be let out—and, ironically, it is the new regime, striving earnestly to undo the past wrongs, that becomes its target. No one thanks Havel for undertaking a massive attempt at restitution under the most difficult conditions. A great many people rage at him because that restitution cannot give them back the forty years of life of which the communist regime deprived them.

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In great part, though, that anger also reflects a feeling of betrayal. The change of regime, euphemistically called "the revolution," did bring us freedom, but a great many people are discovering that that is not what they expected. Few of us reflected on what we did expect, but grumbling over beer offers some insight. "So we have Havel—and we are no better off for it, only worse . . . ." Over beer, the nation in effect admits that what it wanted was what serfs want. Most of us wanted affluence most of all, the glittering plenty we glimpsed across the border in Germany and Austria. The freedom we wanted was freedom from care, freedom from responsibility. We wanted to be free of reality's persistent demands. A popular joke has it that the Czechs want to consume like the Germans, be provided for like the Swedes, and work like the Russians. Improbably, a great many people did expect "the revolution" to bring them all that. Instead, the revolution brought freedom, and that means first of all far greater responsibility, full adult responsibility after years of living like adolescents, with someone to give us orders and someone to blame. It means reality: faking production figures or scholarly achievements, as we have done for years, no longer brings premiums. What counts is what we produce and sell. Worst of all, the revolution did not bring affluence. Two years later, prices have doubled while our wages remain what they were—for those, that is, who did not lose their jobs when their long-bankrupt subsidized factories folded.

There is anger, tremendous anger, very much reminiscent of the mood in Germany after the First World War—the inflation and the depression. There is the anger provoked by the old regime, now directed at the new. There is the anger of disappointed expectations when freedom failed to bring carefree affluence. The search is on for scapegoats—and there is no dearth of unscrupulous politicians willing to offer them. For the Slovaks, it is the Czechs, though the few Jews who survived the wartime Slovak state come in for their share of hatred. For the Czechs, it is the Gypsies and, ironically, each other, as so often before. The basic reality, though, is the anger that makes compromises impossible and conflict inevitable, between people and nations alike.

Conventional wisdom, to be sure, has it that Historical Necessity, now d.b.a. The Invisible Hand, can be relied upon to reverse the decline. Under the pressure of a free market, we are told, we will be forced to change our ways, becoming decisive, ready to take initiative,

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with a clear sense of reality and a vision of our goals. Drawn by the example of the Common Market, we shall be ready to join it as an equal in a few short years. The Invisible Hand has it in hand.

Unfortunately, the example of Mexico or of Sicily make the point that a backward, impoverished, and stagnant society can exist side by side with a prosperous and a dynamic one quite nicely as a pool of cheap labor and a market for inferior merchandise: the rush to unload obsolete technology on naive Central Europeans is already on. It is not true that a rising tide raises all boats. The ones with a short anchor rode get dragged under—and the habits of bondage are a very short rode indeed. Frustrated by their own backwardness but hampered by the habits of bondage from changing it, the peoples of Central Europe are as vulnerable to demagogues as the Germans were after the First World War.

Under those circumstances, it is difficult to have much confidence in the efficacy of The Invisible Hand. Without the legitimating vision of an ideal, without a realistic and responsible citizenry and wise leadership, the lands of the former Soviet empire seem rather unlikely to "join Europe." Left to the working of invisible hands, they would be far more likely to become Europe's Mexico. It would take an active cultural effort, a genuine education in the sense of its root (*e* + *ducere*; to draw out or lead forth), to break the stranglehold of the habits of bondage. Central Europe needs a clear moral vision of free and responsible citizens. It needs a clear distinction between what is for real and what is just pretending. Most of all, it needs a clear vision of a moral ideal, a transcendent purpose to make the effort worth making. Those The Invisible Hand is unlikely to provide.

If not The Invisible Hand, could the West provide them? Perhaps it could, if the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe were capable of approaching it critically, carefully selecting appropriate role models from among the many options the West has to offer. The West, after all, can also mean the Scandinavian commitment to social justice, the commonsense realism of the English, and the sturdy individuality of northern New England. The newly liberated peoples, however, are in no position to pick and choose. They reach out uncritically for everything Western, ready victims for the peddlers of shoddy merchandise and shoddy ideology—and that is what they see. Few Czechs will ever get to live for a year in a Vermont town, but all will see American soap operas. Few are likely to encounter the solid work

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of American philosophers, but many are likely to hear about the death of the subject and the deconstruction of truth, believing what they hear without comprehending it. Few know anything about the social legislation which is the backbone of Western European societies, but all have heard the gospel according to Reagan and Thatcher. When the popular Czech cartoonist Renčín draws his vision of what freedom will bring, he draws a man blissing out on a sofa, surrounded by toys and trophies—an outboard motor, a television set with a VCR, a personal computer, a portable bar, an LP grill. There is not a trace of irony in it: that is what freedom means.

The unfortunate truth is that as the former subjects of the Soviet empire dream it, the American dream has very little to do with liberty and justice for all and a great deal to do with soap operas and the Sears catalogue. The Americans of Czech popular imagination are people who never have to deny themselves anything, who can charge anything that strikes their fancy to their credit cards without ever worrying how they will pay for it. They live in an enchanted land free of all mundane cares, a land where wishing makes it so. Most of all, they live in a land which is totally dedicated to the unlimited expansion of individual material affluence. That is approximately what most Czechs unthinkingly assume the dream of freedom to be, seldom pausing to reflect that it is a dream made up mostly of irresponsibility, unreality, and instantly gratified greed.

An American might well object that that is a grotesque caricature, not a portrait of what America really is. A New Hampshireman would be likely to dismiss it as Californian decadence, a Democrat as a Republican delusion—and not without reason. Unfortunately, that is the image America projects eastward—and there is enough truth in it to make it convincing. America's collective and personal indebtedness does suggest that Americans do indeed shop until they drop, without worrying how they will pay for it. The image of America presented in film, television, and the speeches of George Bush is indeed closer to Disneyland than to reality. And yes, America is the land committed to protecting the ever-rising purchasing power of the well-to-do even at the cost of letting its schools, its cities, its medical care, its transport, its social services, its work force disintegrate. The new version of the American dream, as all who can read lips know, is no new taxes!

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So understood, the American dream becomes a mirror image of the postcommunist reality in Central Europe. It is not a vision that could challenge its decline. Yet the social disintegration in the lands of the former Soviet empire makes it clear that if this civilization is to survive, it must find a legitimating vision and a sense of purpose. Greed and its gratification may motivate individuals, even great aggregates of individuals, but they are not an adequate foundation for bonding them into communities. That is becoming evident not only in Central Europe but also in the post–Cold War United States, abruptly deprived of its sense of purpose by the collapse of its adversary. Western Europe, preoccupied and excited by the task of building a more perfect union, may not be aware of it. Yet the problem is as global as the civilization Europe gave to the globe. For that civilization, greed is not enough, and neither is mere survival. It is a civilization that needs a transcendent moral vision to survive.

Armchair theorists often suggest that the civilization needs a religious revival to restore its spirits. No less a man than Martin Heidegger came to the conclusion that *Nur noch ein Gott kann uns retten*—only another God can save us. Because I am a religious believer and a practicing Christian, I find that thought distinctively frightening. Religious faith—or, if you prefer, the Holy Spirit—can be a powerful personal comforter and motivator, but it does not make a good legitimating vision for a civil society. Emperor Constantine's decision to make Christianity the official faith of the Roman empire transformed a vital faith into a stilted and intolerant ideology. All through the middle ages, the Christian Church, instead of proclaiming God's grace to humans, was justifying an oppressive and arrogant aristocracy, sacred and secular. Regardless of denomination, official churches—the Orthodox in Russia, the Lutheran in Prussia, the Catholic in Austria—became apologists for privilege, not preachers of the gospel. Nor is the performance of Islamic fundamentalism in the role of legitimating vision a cause for optimism. Our civilization needs a transcendent vision, but it is not at all clear that religion should or can provide it.

Political leaders in Central Europe, while paying lip service to religion, tend to look to ethnic identity to provide such a vision. The nation is the higher reality in whose name humans are willing to subordinate their personal desires to the commonweal. "For the good of the nation . . . " I know it well. All through my adult life, through

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forty-two years in the New Hampshire I love, I have lived with double motivation. One was my personal life as a writer, a philosopher, and a New Hampshire homesteader. The other was the powerful sense of a personal calling to do my part that the thousand years of Czech culture and Czech language would not perish under Soviet domination. For years, I wrote a book or an article in Czech for every one I wrote in English, though knowing full well it would be read at most by a handful of refugees. It was that calling that led me to return to Czechoslovakia once the communist regime had collapsed, even though it meant leaving behind so much of what I had loved and worked for. The love of a homeland, the love of a language, the love of a tradition and of all that Latin sums up in the word *patria*, the land of my fathers, can be an immensely powerful motivator.

Still, it is a problematic motivator. The noble patriotism of T. G. Masaryk may have indeed represented the moral ideal that Josiah Royce had in mind when he wrote of a loyalty to loyalty, a commitment to the noblest of which humans are capable. For Masaryk, the nation is a concretization of the ideals of humanity, ideal become flesh, and worthy of love and respect as such—and *only* as such. In the name of such love of his nation Masaryk did a lifelong battle against the anti-Semitism of the Czech nationalists as against a blot on our national identity. To love one's own nation, he was convinced, means to respect and cherish the traditions others love as well. In the name of such love of his nation, Masaryk attacked the much-cherished but unfortunately counterfeit manuscripts of Czech history. National integrity cannot be built on a lie. Masaryk's patriotism is reminiscent of that of the Hebrew prophets for whom Israel's special relation to God is a source not of pride but of obligation. It is not surprising that under Masaryk's leadership Czechoslovakia became a bastion of freedom and democracy amid the rising tide of national socialism.

Unfortunately, the nationalism now bourgeoning in Central Europe has little in common with Masaryk's noble patriotism and a great deal in common with the spiteful and aggressive national chauvinism which has given Europe a century of wars. It is certainly not marked by a willingness to cherish the distinctive traditions of all of Central Europe's many peoples. It is strident and contentious, marked by absolute claims and unyielding demands. One of its

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pronounced traits is its virulent anti-Semitism and a general xenophobia, intensely conscious of racial purity. European nationalists not only replicate the postures and attitudes characteristic of German Nazism but frequently claim continuity with wartime puppet states and the leaders the Nazis brought to power. While patriotism cherishes ethnic specificity, nationalism asserts ethnic supremacy—and that is hard to reconcile with democracy.

All of that makes Central European nationalism rather problematic. The "national aspirations" the nationalists invoke may be legitimate, but the absolute claims they tend to make on their behalf cannot but be counterproductive in a region as ethnically complex as Central Europe. Here, the peaceful coexistence and commonweal of the various nations demand maximum toleration, mutual understanding, and willingness to compromise. Absolute claims cannot but lead to confrontation and conflict in which there can be no victors, only victims. It may be possible that the politically immature nations of Central Europe must pass through a phase of virulent nationalism before they become capable of a mature and tolerant patriotism, learning to live and work for their nations rather than to kill and die for them. Western Europe had to pass through such a phase: the mature democratic community which the West is now building arose on the wreckage left behind by the cataclysm of nationalistic conflict. Still, that hardly makes nationalism a suitable source of a legitimating vision to save Western civilization.

If the Central European scene is at all indicative, that vision, if it comes at all, may well come from an unlikely source—from the grief and horror at what is happening to our natural world. In the last twenty years of communist rule, while the West was becoming environmentally aware, our rulers did not pay even lip service to the environment. Their way of dealing with the negative environmental impact of their policies was to censor all news about it. The slogan was "Progress," understood as expanding heavy industrial production by all means, at any cost. The land suffered beyond imagination. In northeastern Bohemia, the forests of my childhood have turned into moonscapes of blackened stumps beneath a cover of fine ash. On many days, children can go out only in gauze masks. The adults take their chances and life expectancy plummets. Soil, water, food are contaminated; even mothers' milk is too laced with PBCs and DDT to be fit for infants. What in America's vast spaces may seem a

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marginal problem assaults the senses in our crowded land. Our land is dying.

The Czechs have an intense relation to the land. A nineteenth-century poet, Karel Jaromír Erben, writes of a woman whose soul resides in a willow and who dies when her jealous husband cuts down the willow tree. It is a good metaphor for our relation to the forests, the streams, and the meadows of our land. We all grew up on fairy tales in which animals interact with humans as equals, bestowing blessings upon them. The need to save our suffering land, our beloved land, is the one appeal which still evokes a positive response. At least our young people, though as skeptical of all ideals as their elders, hear that call without skepticism. Though they may feel no personal responsibility for the sick or the unemployed, though socialism, nationalism, Reaganomics may all seem just stories beyond truth and falsehood, though individual affluence may seem to them the only measure of progress, the suffering of our land still addresses them. That—and perhaps that alone—is something they experience as a moral imperative, calling them to personal responsibility and offering a vision: save the good earth. We may yet regain our civic maturity because our land needs us.

That, admittedly, is a fragile hope at best. The heritage of greed, unreality, and irresponsibility has been deeply ingrained in us by the years of communist rule and reinforced by the message coming from the West. There is widespread frustration and anger that the liberation did not bring instant and carefree affluence, and there are racist demagogues eager to use that anger in the service of tribal passions. There is just so much hatred that the love of the good earth seems a slender reed to oppose to it.

There is, however, nothing else—and nothing may be as important. Communism has effectively discredited the ideal of social justice as a legitimating vision. The alternative, the vision of ever-expanding individual consumption, has become visibly counterproductive. Prague is already one of the world's most polluted cities. Were we to drive as many passenger miles per capita as the Americans, we should all perish of carbon monoxide poisoning. A finite world cannot sustain infinite demand. Worse still, finite human beings cannot sustain infinite affluences, as the children of the rich through the ages demonstrate. If our civilization is to escape the fate of the Roman empire, its predecessor in affluence, it cannot seek its legitimating

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vision in greed. It has to seek it in love, be willing to face the reality of the devastation humans have wrought upon the earth, willing to accept the responsibility for it, and willing to commit itself to healing the wounds. The vision of nature at peace and of humans at peace with nature may well be the one legitimating vision left to us.

The East is disintegrating. Years of communist rule have destroyed habits of responsibility and reality and have left the lands of the former Soviet empire without a legitimating vision. The only available alternative, the Central European version of the American dream, led to frustration and anger when liberation did not bring instant affluence. Now ambitious demagogues are using that anger to subvert patriotism into the service of nationalist passions as the newly freed peoples prepare to use their freedom to blow each other to kingdom come.

But are the dynamics of disintegration in the East that different from the strains barely concealed beneath the surface in America? Or are the loss of personal integrity, the loss of a clear sense of reality, the loss of a legitimating vision all culturewide phenomena, not resolved in America, only masked by instant affluence financed by an ever-mounting debt? What will happen in America when the credit bubble bursts? What would happen if America decided to wipe out its debt by hyperinflating its currency, as Germany did in the 1920s? Is David Duke really that different from the nationalist demagogues who are now rehabilitating wartime quislings in the lands of the former Soviet empire?

Half of each year, I live and work in Prague, but for forty-two years I have lived and worked in America. I am struck much more by the similarities than by any difference. The social disintegration in the lands of the former Soviet empire seems to me simply to bring out in stark relief what in the West has been masked by affluence but is no less present—the weakness of a civilization that has lost its legitimating vision, its sense of reality and of personal responsibility. For some three hundred years, that civilization lived in the illusion that the pursuit of happiness could be supplanted by the pursuit of property. The Soviet empire discredited the idea by failing in the latter pursuit, the West by succeeding far too well, but the moral is the same: the pursuit of property is not a substitute for a legitimating vision.

I am convinced that if our civilization is to survive—and if the former "East" is to halt its progressive disintegration—we all need to

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learn that happiness is not to be found in acquiring but in giving, not in exploitation but in caring, not in self-gratification but in self-transcendence. Perhaps the agony of the natural world is offering us what Rome did not have, a second chance to learn that lesson. And perhaps, just perhaps, we will yet learn that lesson, in Czechoslovakia and in New Hampshire, just in time.

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Fear is the main source of superstition, and one of the main sources of cruelty. To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom.

Bertrand Russell
From "An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish," 1950

A general definition of civilization: a civilized society is exhibiting the fine qualities of truth, beauty, adventure, art, peace.

Alfred North Whitehead
From "Adventures of Ideas," 1933

Industrialized communities neglect the very objects for which it is worth while to acquire riches in their feverish preoccupation with the means by which riches can be acquired.

Richard Henry Tawney
From "The Acquisitive Society," 1920

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Fabio Luca Cavazza

The Italian Paradox: An Exit from Communism

FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS, the Cold War offered the countries of Western Europe warm and comfortable protection. The Italian Communist Party, the PCI—the most important seat of the Marxist and Leninist faith in the West—also benefited from this situation.

In 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, however, the PCI entered crisis. One of the two pillars on which the Italian political system had been supported since 1945 became useless. Without warning, a major Western democracy, Italy, a member of the group of the seven most industrialized countries of the world, saw its internal political equilibrium wholly upset by the end of communism, a development that had seemed relevant only to Russia and its European ex-satellites. The differences between all these countries and Italy are of course immense. And yet, by one of the familiar ironies of history, there is a point in common.

The history of the satellite states (a story of moral slavery and material misery), sewn with the red thread of a barbarous totalitarian power that imposed its power for decades, is beginning to be understood. It is time for the West to learn more about Italy, a free society since 1945 in which millions of Italians, communist and noncommunist, worked hard, making an ancient, impoverished peninsula one of the wealthiest countries of the world.

Since the end of the 1970s, however, Italy's wealth has been squandered, with ever-increasing and seemingly uncontrolled speed, by the people who today govern Italy, indeed who govern with the

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consent of those whom they rule. Citizens have generally preferred to consume wealth, thinking very little about how to maintain or reproduce it. The governors have allocated—often illicitly—enormous quantities of resources to render indestructible the bastions of their own power.

Italy is like a great river flooded today by too heavy expenses. The expenditures, financed to a great degree through the creation of a public debt equal to if not greater than the annual gross national product, threaten the stability of the country. The Italian public debt is estimated to be about 1.224 billion dollars at the average rate of exchange (as of December 1991, of 1,185 liras to the American dollar).

The fall of communism has shed new light on the plight that unites the crisis of the countries of Eastern Europe with that of Italy. The communist regimes fell because they devoured themselves; the Italian political order is today in grave danger because of comparable though by no means identical hazards. It has not fallen for two reasons: a nontotalitarian regime, based on the consent of the citizens, profits from the political and economic net established by the West to protect it. This net still functions with proven techniques that are recognized to be efficient.

Though the two political orders agree to be the antitheses of each other, their dynamics are the same: in both instances, a *nomenklatura*—never called that in Italy—seeks to preserve its own power. It has ended up devouring itself, gravely endangering the country entrusted to its care.

The fall of communism has thrown a dramatic and disconcerting spotlight on the Italian crisis. The Italian political order cannot remain what it has been during these last decades, although it is impossible to foresee what it will be. Whether it will perish, live on for several more years, transforming a vital nation into an anemic, sickly one, or succeed in extricating itself from its present dead end through a happy combination of fear, moral energy, and Western solidarity no one can say. The only certainty is that the Italian democracy cannot avoid an examination of conscience. Required to make decisions, or, with full awareness, deciding not to decide, it must move away from its present moorings.

The year 1945 witnessed the arrival on the Italian political scene of two movements that from their beginning never drank very deeply

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from the genuine springs of democracy. On paper, they were sworn enemies. The two—the Catholic, which evolved into the Christian Democratic Party (the DC), and the communist (PCI), heir to an older Italian socialist tradition—together with certain other political forces, united to give life to the new Italian republic.

The first socialist movements in Italy had taken root between 1870 and 1880 in the fields to the northeast of the Po River Valley. They then spread to those parts of Italy where the living conditions of the peasants were both foul and primitive. In a speech to the Chamber of Deputies in 1880, Sidney Sonnino, a reformist conservative, and the future minister of foreign affairs (during the First World War), said that "the condition of the peasant class . . . moves one to pity; in a full half of the Kingdom [of Italy] it is worse than in any other region of Europe . . . . Peasants represent more than sixty per cent of the population, and Italy will never be . . . sure of its own future until our peasants feel that they are truly Italian."[1]

Despite these (and other comparable) warnings, the government did not respond to the challenge of "the peasant question." For the government, the peasants were rebels. In fact, these poor men were rebels, though in no conventional sense of that term, having no concept of what a national state was or any wish to resist it. For the new kingdom of Italy, whose major preoccupation was to build a state and exact obedience, there was no great interest in integrating a majority population of poor, disinherited, and illiterate people into a new political order. Given this record of neglect, it was almost inevitable that at the end of the nineteenth century "the peasant movement [came to have] an almost exclusively Socialist connotation."[2]

Against the hopes of Sidney Sonnino, the peasants became more socialist than Italian. What was supposed not to happen in fact happened. The primary civic and political loyalties of a great part of the peasant world, and, later, of workers, turned not to Italy and its institutions but to a socialist movement whose ideological principles "were, in essence, the following: the importance of the class struggle . . . the refusal to [cooperate] with the forces of the government identified as bourgeois; internationalism; the rejection of all forms of patriotism; a scorn for democracy."[3] The socialist shepherds could not fail to protect the interests of their flock; they set about

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organizing leagues, unions, and cooperatives, sending their men to city councils but also to Parliament.

And so, little by little, there came into being a political and moral reality that was to remain the hallmark of the Italian Left for more than a century: first socialist, then communist. Given its ideological profile, the Left was "outside" the state, whether the state was a kingdom or a republic; in everyday life, the Left lived "within" the system, seeking by whatever means to take advantage of it.

The primary loyalty owed the country into which one is born was dead before it had a chance to come to life. The consequences: a weak and fragile sense of national identity; no formation of a common political citizenry; little agreement to abide by the substantive rules that govern the functioning of a democracy.

The fact remains, however, that for many Italians there was a total compatibility between being a convinced communist and a sincere patriot: it was a sacrosanct mission to bestow on Italy the truth, justice, rights, and social equality that would follow on the realization of the ultimate ends of socialism. Politics as Utopia established itself in Italy. It was to endure for a very long time.

The indisputable leader of the Italian Communists at the end of the Second World War was Palmiro Togliatti, then living in Moscow, who succeeded in never losing Stalin's favor. A flexible and prudent man, he disembarked in Naples in 1944, proving himself very quickly to be the master of the art of political compromise. A good part of the Communist Party membership was persuaded that his compromises were intended to throw dust in the eyes of his adversaries; his aim, they imagined, was an October Revolution, wholly in Lenin's style. As a matter of fact, Togliatti was terrified by what he called "the Greek prospect": a communist insurrection put down through the intervention of the armed forces of a foreign power; that had brought the Greek party to its ruin.[4] The Party rank and file, motivated by Party activists, led an attempt on Togliatti's life, in 1948, occupying public squares and buildings in a number of Italian cities; there were rough encounters with the police, and many feared the worst. The communist leaders chose, however, to put an effective brake on their members, more than ready for street battle. From his hospital bed, Togliatti recommended prudence. He had no wish to dissipate his patrimony, either of votes or of power.

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Quietly, in 1956, with the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party, the Italian Communist Party completed its metamorphosis: it became, in effect, a conservative (as opposed to a revolutionary) party, and the members accepted the new party line. They would certainly have raised objections to this had the metamorphosis of the Party involved a renunciation of its privileged political relationship with Moscow. It was one thing to say farewell to the prospect of revolution; it was an entirely different thing to abandon the political ideals incarnate in Moscow. The beacon of socialism remained in the East. Italian Communists could not turn their gaze suddenly to the West, toward the lands of capitalism.

The Italian Communists became part and parcel of the Christian Democratic regime, administering their own fiefs, and in the most bourgeois fashion, harvesting and selling the first fruits of the famous Italian economic miracle. They were prepared, quite predictably, to allow the economy of mass consumption to swallow them. Cutting the umbilical cord to Moscow, however, was for them inconceivable; it would have meant the abandonment of whatever ideological and political specificity distinguished them from the DC and the northern European social democracies. The Moscow connection was their principal source of political pride.

In the national political elections of 1976, the PCI reached its zenith; 34.4 percent of the approximately 37 million votes cast were in their favor. In 1987, their share fell to 26.6 percent of the 38 million votes cast. In the same period, the Christian Democrats registered 38.7 percent and 34.3 percent. The Italian Communist Party had managed to lose eight percentage points in eleven years; still, some 10 million Italians continued to vote PCI.

Not a few were convinced communists; many, however, were not. From 1948 on, a good number of Italians understood how their political system worked. There were many parties, but two counted more than all the others: these were the DC and the PCI. The golden rule: in every election the Christian Democratic Party would have to receive more votes than the Italian Communist Party, but it was not in their interest for the distance between the two to become an abyss, for the Communists to fall too low.

Fifteen months after the fall of the Berlin Wall, on February 3, 1991, among all the uncertainties that gripped Europe, and taking more time than it took Chancellor Kohl to unite the two Germanies,

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the PCI changed its name, becoming the Democratic Party of the Left (the Partito Democratico della Sinistra: the PDS). A significant percentage, however, refused to accept this decision, abandoning the Party, founding the movement of Communist Refoundation (Rifondazione Comunista: the RC).

In the municipal elections of November 24, 1991, at Brescia, the PDS and the RC received 9.4 percent and 5.4 percent of the vote, a total of 14.8 percent, compared with the 16.4 percent that went to the PCI in the preceding municipal elections of 1990, and with the 21.3 percent in Brescia in the national elections of 1987. From these figures it is impossible to predict how many votes will be cast for the PDS and the RC in the national elections scheduled for the spring of 1992. One can safely say, though, that they will receive fewer votes than the PCI did in 1987, that the trend is not likely to reverse itself. This, however, does not mean that the Communists and the ex-Communists will suddenly disappear. Until the year 2000, at least, 5–6 million Italians will continue to vote either for the PDS, pretending to forget its communist origins, or for the RC, happy to declare themselves advocates of the traditional Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

Toward the end of 1991 one could see on the walls of many Italian cities a huge PDS poster with the words "A sinistra" (To the Left,) in large yellow letters; underneath, in black lettering: "We have renewed ourselves, to create a new Italy." Was this in fact a self-renewal, a self-motivated new beginning, or had the Communists been forced into it? All this confirms that at least until February 3, 1991, the PCI continued to remain "outside" the republic under its old ideological profile, but "within" it from the point of view of daily political practice.[5]

The question of the primary political loyalties of the Italian people remains unresolved even today. A heavy responsibility for this rests on the shoulders of the PCI. And it cannot be absolved by the fact that other political forces, economic and social, have contributed to keeping unresolved a question to which the future of Italian democracy is intimately bound.

The Christian Democrats, as well as the Communists, were there from the beginning of 1945, in that they carried a remarkable legacy of both social and political experiences. In the first place, they embraced the tradition of social work sponsored by Catholic orga-

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nizations from the very first years of the kingdom of Italy; second, they carried on a tradition of a more political nature, that of the Popular Party founded by Don Luigi Sturzo in 1919. Many of the leaders of the DC (Alcide De Gasperi among them) made their debut in politics in the ranks of the Popular Party. Their experiences greatly influenced the forms taken by the new Italian republic.

Two groups of questions wait to be answered. First, what precise political legacy did the Popular Party bequeath to the DC? Did it in significant ways contribute to the fashioning of the political order of the new republic? Second, in 1945, what was the relationship between religion and politics? What position did Catholics take vis-à-vis the republic? Where were their primary political loyalties? Is it possible to say of the Catholics what has been said of the Communists, that their primary political loyalties were both "outside" and "inside" the republic?

The party founded by Don Sturzo anticipated in many ways the parties founded in post–World War II Europe, parties of the new mass industrialized democracies, whose programs contained not a trace of the Marxist-Leninist notion of class. Prominent in the platform of the Popular Party, for example, were concerns about the modernization of public administration; the decentralization of power, to give real autonomy to local government; the abolition (or at least the progressive reduction) of economic protectionism; the fostering of independent small farm ownership; and, obviously, greater freedom for Catholic schools.

In order for these concerns to be something more than paper proclamations, Don Sturzo had to create a strong bargaining position for himself. To carve out a space for himself and his party in the Italian political system, the first plank of his program was the adoption of an electoral law of proportional representation. He had no other choice. To give himself some room in a tight, closed, and centralized power system, where one could succeed in getting anywhere without a strong parliamentary delegation prepared to fight, powerful enough to develop relationships of cooperation and exchange with other political forces, proportional representation was the only answer.

Because the government needed the support of the Catholics and the new party to contain the aggressive advances of the socialist movement—1919 and 1920 were to remain in the collective memory

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of the country as "the red biennium"—Don Sturzo won his demand for a new law of proportional representation immediately. Elections were held and the results surpassed all hopes: ninety-nine followers of Don Sturzo were elected to Parliament.

From that time on, the political success of the Catholics and the electoral law of proportional representation became a single political equation; one implied the other. Despite the tragic political and historical experience of the Weimar Republic period between the wars, the DC in 1945 believed in the virtues of that electoral principle; it had taken firm hold of its imagination. The hostility of the DC toward electoral systems like the American or the English was something other than an act of great political astuteness. Christian democracy, finding itself face-to-face with the massive and disturbing presence of the Italian Communist Party, had no wish to facilitate its taking over the government by adopting an electoral system that would allow "the winner to take all." Considerations of this sort had some role, but the reasons for rejecting were more complex to the American institutional model. Massimo Teodori, in a book soon to be published, reconstructs the political debate on the American model as it took place in the Italian Constituent Assembly. Reading his accurate (and entertaining) account, one must conclude that the republic's founding fathers turned down the American design because it was foreign to their own cultural background, not because they were fearful of offering the PCI an even remote chance of coming to power.[6]

The conclusions derived from a reading of Teodori's research are confirmed in the excellent book Pietro Scoppola has devoted to the politics of the Italian parties between 1945 and 1990.[7] Scoppola notes that in the period after the Second World War, Italian political debates were centered on the "crisis of prefascist parliamentarism," without picking up on "the more properly *institutional* aspects." In short,

> whatever blame was involved, in the crisis of parliamentary government . . . was . . . somewhat simplistically laid wholly and only to the liberal ruling class, to its weaknesses in respect to Fascism and in its collaboration with it. This helped bring about a state of affairs in which the reconstruction of democracy was perceived by the parties of the masses as a return to a process that had been interrupted, rather than requiring a rethinking of the basic organization of the state. The

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> problem of the stability of the government was present, without a doubt, but it took second place to the problem of relaunching the system, affirming the authority of the parties of mass membership, which involved the noncritical acceptance of proportional representation as the most advantageous electoral system.[8]

In brief, the political positions of the DC and the PCI, though different, based on quite distinctive interests, both accepted that the power of the one presupposed the power of the other.

Meanwhile, in their perception of the facts, they agreed on several points: first, and most importantly, to give precedence to the demands of the parties of the masses, that is to say, to ensure political and civic legitimacy once and for all to both the Catholic and the communist movements. The old liberal state had been dissolved in the years following the First World War. As Roberto Vivarelli has correctly observed, fascism "was the fruit and not the cause of the crisis of the liberal state."[9] The Second World War had swept fascism away; still, its commitment to introduce Italy to the techniques of mass organization remained. In addition, from 1945 on, with the extension of the vote to women, universal suffrage was achieved. In short, there was a political and social vacuum in Italy; someone had to fill it. All the indices suggested that the times were ripe for great mass parties. Neither the DC nor the PCI could afford the luxury of missing out on a once-in-a-lifetime conjuncture of history and politics.

To keep alive the old organization of the centralized state as it was formed after 1861 was another objective. If the centralized state was the one most acceptable to totalitarian dictatorships, it was also congenial to parties busily preparing themselves for the exercise of political, social, and cultural hegemony in a nation which, after fascism and war, aspired to develop as a democracy.[10]

To confirm the electoral policy of proportional representation that Don Sturzo wanted in 1919, the Catholics knew they had been called on to manage the old liberal state. They also knew they were an absolute novelty for the country. The stakes were high, and they did not want to risk even the possibility of a quarrel with a public opinion whose readiness to embrace them was not at all clear. They kept faith with proportional representation: together with the small lay parties (Liberal, Republican, and Social Democrat), they were able to govern

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Italy until 1963, until, that is, the Socialist Party (PSI) was permitted to join them in coalition governments. For his part, what could Togliatti do? Satisfied with the parcels of power dispensed in his direction, it followed that a system of proportional representation was perfectly adapted to the circumstances in which the PCI found itself. The system allowed for an exact measurement to be made of privileges and benefits that were suited to the communist representation in Parliament. The Christian Democratic Party and the Italian Communist Party became the two pillars of the Italian political system. The DC espoused the electoral law because it was prisoner of its memory; also, because it was expected to profit them. The PCI accepted it because it was suited to its political tactics. The product of this combination has been called "the marriage of parliamentarism and proportionalism" by Scoppola.[11]

De Tocqueville, in a famous page of *Democracy in America*, writes that in Europe "the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom almost always [move] in opposite directions," whereas in the New World they are "intimately joined the one to the other," such that "they reign together under the same sun." Not being a Lutheran, de Tocqueville was obviously interested in learning the position of the Catholic clergy; he noticed very early that his interlocutors agreed in attributing "to the complete separation of Church and State the 'peaceable kingdom' that religion exercised in their country."[12] There was no comparable "peaceable kingdom" for religion in Europe, least of all for Catholicism. On the contrary, it had been involved in a conflict that had reached its climax in the nineteenth century, which only the Second Vatican Council would definitively end. As late as 1917, two years prior to the birth of the party of Don Sturzo, eminent Vatican writers criticized "vigorously and with intellectual acumen . . . the principle of popular sovereignty, fruit of rebellion against the Church of God and indirect cause of all disorder."[13]

The approach to participation in politics and democracy was for Italian Catholics a long and very troubled journey. This is not the place to review the stages of that rough road, what Scoppola has called the tormented relationship between "democracy and truth," a relationship intimately bound to the other one between "democracy and revolution."[14]

For Scoppola, "the collapse of Communism is not only the failure of an economic and social system; it is the most sensational denial of

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the very idea of revolution, as the founding moment of a *totally new* social order, capable of creating conditions of absolute freedom."[15] Today, as in earlier periods, "religious consciousness . . . repudiates . . . any illusion of absolute freedom produced by a social revolution." Scoppola recalls the positions taken by Alessandro Manzoni and Joseph de Maistre in respect to the French Revolution. The Italian novelist, author of *I Promessi Sposi*, viewed it from the perspective of liberal Catholicism; he criticized it not "in the name of the rights of the Church," but because it was converted from a means into an absolute end. For Manzoni, the terror was "the organic fruit" of a revolution that had assumed as its final goal an "aspiration to absolute freedom." Joseph de Maistre was opposed to a "revolutionary culture" that would descend from its own "ideological level" to present itself as herald of an "alternative all-encompassing ideology."

It is interesting to note that for Scoppola the only real alternative "to the relationship between the religious and the political common to both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary culture is suggested by the American experience with democracy . . . . The distance in this sense between the French and the American Revolutions . . . is profound": it is a distance de Tocqueville addressed at the time of his voyage when he emphasized "the spontaneous understanding between religion and democracy in America." In fact, in the "American model . . . religion and politics are carefully distinguished: the state is rigorously nonconfessional, but religion, in forms not defined by sect, is recognized as among the sources of democratic life." Of all historical experiences, the American model is the only one in which "democracy" and "truth" have found both a reconciliation and a possibility of coexistence. In fact, "the order of truth is not denied; what is denied is the competence of the state to define it. Democracy presupposes the rights of the citizen to search for the truth; it does not recognize rights to the truth as such."

While Italy is confronting its own special "exit from communism," several Italian scholars (spontaneously and separately) have come to pay close attention to the American model: Scoppola from a Catholic perspective, Teodori from a lay point of view. It is a development that merits careful consideration.

In 1945, it was impossible to define the relationship between religion and politics and, therefore, the relationship "between democracy and religious truth . . . in theoretical terms other than those"

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arrived at by the papacy at the end of the Second World War. This was true though not a few Catholics lived that relationship "with a greater awareness of its historic complexity, based, for some of them, on an explicit appeal to the tradition of Liberal Catholicism."

It is impossible to judge the primary political loyalties of Catholics with the same measuring rods used for Socialists and Communists. If the latter were both "outside" and "inside" the republic, the Catholics were subject to loyalties, moral obligations, and political tensions of a quite different kind. If the Catholics have made great advances in their journey toward participation in democracy, many of the rougher patches on the road have not yet been smoothed out. For Catholics, at the time of the foundation of the Italian republic, one cannot speak of primary political loyalties in the majority, but of imperfect, incomplete loyalties. And so it was to be until the Second Vatican Council.

Given the Italian situation from 1861 on, and given the past of the two parties which met in 1945, the conclusion is inevitable that "Italian democracy came to birth without a chance of grounding itself in a secure heritage of common cultural experiences and values." Everyone in Italy in 1945 was supposed to be democratic, but no one knew exactly how to be that. The scenery, however, was in place. The lights were on. There was a script. The actors were present. The play could begin.

It started out well. At the helm of the Christian Democrats, De Gasperi lost no time, knowing that the Italians required confidence and political calm if they were to rebuild a destroyed country. He concluded that the security the country needed was to be found in the West, not in the East. Relegating the PCI to the opposition, he respected it as a member in full standing of the Italian political system. He surrounded himself with representatives of the prefascist ruling class who distinguished themselves by their cosmopolitan, nonprovincial culture, men like Luigi Einaudi and Count Carlo Sforza. To the former De Gasperi entrusted the task of healing the Italian lira, from inflationary illness to new, vigorous health conditions; to the latter, he entrusted foreign affairs. He established a political understanding with Ugo La Malfa and Giuseppe Saragat, men of a younger generation, leaders respectively of the Republican Party and the Social Democratic Party.

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De Gasperi, a man educated in many nations—in 1911 he was elected to the Austrian parliament to represent the Alpine lands, destined to become Italian after the First World War—took less than five minutes to grasp the meaning of the revolutionary strategies with which Jean Monnet espoused hoping to build European supranational organizations, finally burying the politics of rival nationalisms that since 1870 had left Europe a blood-drenched and demolished world. On the foundations of his political education, De Gasperi established an easy relationship of trust with both Konrad Adenauer and Maurice Schuman. Never neglecting Ernest Bevin, these men formed the European team "present at the creation" of the Western system of order.

De Gasperi won the crucial elections of April 18, 1948. The Italians had returned to work. In 1945 the national income was half of what it had been in 1938. In 1950 it was equal to that of 1938; by 1960, it had doubled. De Gasperi governed the nation until 1953, and did everything that a man of politics needs to do if he is to qualify as a statesman. There was nobody else quite like him.

A good beginning, a dreadful end. An entire country is turned into the private property of its political parties. More brutally, it is not simply a company of limited liability in which the parties hold a fraction of the shares. The Italian system is an oligarchic association of politicians who use the parties, or the party factions they control, who are led, as pawns in their own private game of power.

Elections are not in the service of citizens, who are permitted to declare what party they wish to govern them. Elections are in the service of the parties, to determine universally and percentage-wise, their respective quotas of access to the exploitation of the public's wealth. The party congresses in the service of these same politicians and factions determine their respective percentages of political power on the basis of which access to the exploitation of the public wealth is distributed proportionately.

Italian governments become coalitions of parties in which each manages a share of the power. The positions of minister and undersecretary (about a hundred of them) are assigned on the basis of the power relationships as they emerge from the congresses of those parties taking part in whatever coalition happens to be ruling the country. Regulating this complex mechanism—incredible as it may seem—is a manual that calculates the percentages of power to be

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allotted politicians and their factions in every possible and imaginable situation. In short, the law of proportional representation has joined the parties together in a pact of petty tyrants; it allows this dominion of lords, subdivided into factions, forever fighting to increase their share of power.

In simple terms, in the last dozen years, in a situation increasingly dramatic but taken less and less seriously, we have reached the ultimate stage of the perversion of what in a democracy ought to be the function of political parties.

While it is possible that political systems in other countries, normally classified as democracies, show qualities equal to or worse than those of the Italian system, what makes the Italian situation unique are two characteristics: a total lack of moral decency; a lack of interest in any political problem, domestic or international, irrelevant to the power play of the parties and their men. Under both these aspects, Italy has become a country politically useless to itself and to anyone else, from the countries of the European Community to those of the broader international community to which it belongs.

To shed light on the stages of this evolution (and to anticipate some conclusions and predictions) it is necessary to examine the methods used by the parties, and the rules of social behavior that have come to be a part of our national behavior as a consequence of those political methods. The strong points of the system need to be noted; attention must be given also to the weak points.

In the very early phase, the DC and the PCI were able to mobilize Italian society by capitalizing on "the enthusiasm and the delight [of the people] for their refound freedom, and their wish to create and construct according to new hopes and new myths."[16] The two parties offered infrastructures which allowed the Italian people to restore a social fabric destroyed by the war. Each of them brought into being a multitude of "collateral" organizations: whoever had professional, cultural, or social interests in common (and an ideological leaning toward one or other of the two parties) could meet and make plans for the creation of what was expected to be a new Italian society.

This phase of mobilization, however, was short-lived. People discovered that it was possible to live private social and cultural lives outside the "collateral" organizations. The election of April 18, 1948, gave many a renewed sense of security; gradually, they abandoned the political scene. In the 1950s, the Christian Demo-

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cratic Party and the Italian Communist Party ceased to be parties of creative energy; they became parties of occupation, whose chief purpose was to staff and control the public institutions of society. A second phase began, and continues to this day.

The parties entrusted the "collateral" organizations with a new mission: to manage the "clients whose security and wages were guaranteed through the bureaucratic apparatus of the state" or whose special benefits were distributed by means of the so-called "little laws."[17] A list of the kinds of favors bestowed tends to approach infinity: for example, it includes not only jobs in already overstaffed governmental agencies, but also wrongfully granted retirement pensions. In many cases these favors convert votes into commodities of market exchange value: do me a good turn and I'll vote for you.[18]

But there is more. A third phase (still more noteworthy for its consequences) was grafted onto the second. Around the middle of the 1950s the DC ordered the great industrial and financial holdings which were the property of the state, such as the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction (IRI) and the National Hydrocarbons Agency, to withdraw from the "Confindustria" (the association representing the interests of private industry) and to form a separate organization of their own. As a tool for the political control of the so-called "enterprises of state participation," the DC created a new ministry.

Complementing this initiative was the institution of economic legislation which, for all practical purposes, forced both great and small business people in the private sector to be obliged to turn to the mediation of politicians if they wished to secure the assistance, financial aid, and other resources legally destined for industry. The politics of exchange passed from the trading of a vote to a higher and much more sophisticated level.

Finally, still in this third phase, the DC began to choose exclusively men of absolute fidelity to the party, or to one of its internal factions, to head both the "enterprises of state participation" and national and local public agencies such as banks or other financial institutions. They frequently legitimated such acts with laws and regulations created under fascism, still on the books.

The centralized state, in its wisdom and foresight, preserved all the laws and regulations promulgated after 1861. A calculated fishing

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among the laws of Italy allows for an immense range of options; to date, the Italian state bureaucracy has willingly supplied the public sector with administrative procedures for carrying on its work of expropriating in the public domain for its private use of individuals. It serves the Italian party system with great efficiency; the Italian people, with great inefficiency.

The DC has found itself, from the early 1960s on, obliged to share with the other political parties a part of the power it had once almost wholly monopolized. Proportional representation has its laws; it inevitably sets in motion mechanisms like those that today govern RAI-TV, the agency that administers the three public television networks. As one of the IRI companies, RAI was subjected, until the middle of the 1970s, to total control by the Christian Democrats. Today, the DC has to accept a division of that power: the three television networks are run by the DC, the PDS, and the PSI.[19]

All the Italian parties are involved in a very elaborate system of partition of benefits. Governmental parties, and the DC above all, tend to have a lion's share. So, for instance, IRI traditionally belongs to the DC's area of interest, while ENI (the National Hydrocarbons Agency, founded by Enrico Mattei, a Christian Democrat) has become a fiefdom of Craxi's Socialist Party. The PCI points of strength in the partition of benefits can be particularly found at the local government level (especially in the "red" regions of central Italy), or, for instance, in the intricate web of national and local agencies administering the national health and welfare system. Not only are their boards filled with directors appointed by the parties (the PCI included), but they are by and large staffed with personnel belonging to this or that party. Tens of thousands of individuals owe their jobs just to this partition or these spheres of influence between the political parties.

The diffusion of such methods has brought into the entire country specific rules of social behavior. Italian society has become divided into segments that reflect the percentages of proportional power of the parties, of the politicians who head their factions. Many professional associations have been divided along lines that reflect the ideological and political positions of the parties. The directorate of the newspapermen's national guild is divided along party lines. This means that any party tends to have its man in the news rooms of the main Italian newspapers in order to insure that the political positions

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of the party finds its way into the newspapers' editorial policies. Judges are divided into groups that mirror political quotas; in their associations, elections take place according to proportional distribution. Certain professional associations have not chosen to organize themselves in this way; Confindustria, for example, is an organization not divided along party lines. But since all decisions are in the hands of the parties, Italian businesspeople—the big and the small—are compelled to join up with a party or a politician if they are to get what they need.

Under his elegant clothes every businessman wears a T-shirt where, instead of "I love New York," is the logo "I love . . ." followed by the name of the political strongman he has most recently been compelled to link up with. Proportional representation has obliged Italians as a whole, and not only in the business sector, to wear these T-shirts displaying their personal affiliation with politicians.

A description of the methods adopted by the parties to establish themselves as rulers of the country is at the same time a description of their strong points. They include:

- No decentralization of power; no autonomy of local government. Even if there were examples of real autonomy, they would be canceled out by the uniformity of party methods.
- The administration of the state still functions according to the Piedmontese model transplanted in Italy since 1861. In addition to centralization, its chief characteristic is that it emphasizes the sort of formal control that precedes the execution of a law while neglecting to follow up on the quality and success of its administration.
- State officials are in the service of politicians, not of citizens. In exchange, the bureaucracy gets privileges, immunities, and a variety of protections.
- Every decision comes to be sanctioned by a law or a "leggina." No one knows how many there are. And they are ambiguous, almost impossible to interpret. The more numerous the laws, the more their interpretation depends on discretionary criteria decided on by the politicians with the help of the bureaucrats.
- All public economic resources are under the direct control of the parties, or the leaders of party factions. They are distributed through "market exchange" procedures.

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- The "enterprises of state participation," the state agencies which administer public services, and the most important banking institutions, are managed by people nominated by the parties, according to the criterion of proportional distribution.

The list could be continued, but it must end here. Things do not change. The methods by which the country is governed have opened gaping holes in the budgets of agencies that today administer the vast galaxy of national agencies, from health and retirement to railroads.

As for the Italian people, they have voted through the years as disciplined supporters of political parties. A good deal of the well-being of the Italians has been generated by wealth distributed by the parties, by resources that properly belong to the state, that have been withheld through various forms of tax evasion. Every so often the state issues a decree allowing its citizens, by payment of some puny sum, to be absolved from their fiscal sins.

In no country of the world can political assent be bought unless there exists among its citizens a basic disposition to allow themselves to be bought. The Italian people have never seriously criticized the methods by which their parties govern them. They have simply accepted the situation and have become accomplices. Only today are we beginning to see signs of restlessness and concern.

The strong point of the Italian political system has been the stability of the vote in the forty-four years since 1948. I believe I am not far from the truth when I say that there has existed a tacit social contract between the parties and the electorate whose central nucleus is the following: the share of public wealth confiscated by the political class, however high, must always be significantly inferior to the share of wealth distributed to the citizens or withheld by them from the state. With this essential point once established, each of the parties to the agreement has felt itself free to exploit the resources it has received for whatever ends each deems most useful and profitable or simply most pleasant and attractive. What other lubricant could have greased so well a system that has worked brilliantly from the end of the Second World War to this very day?

Toward the end of 1990, several English men of politics judged that the continued presence of Mrs. Thatcher at the head of government was prejudicial to the interests of the country, damaging to the fortunes of the Conservative Party. Several weeks later, forced to

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resign, to return home, she will appear some decades hence as a prominent figure in the pages of a historical biography. No Italian politician has ever been sent home, to become at a later date the chief protagonist of a book, or even of a chapter in Italian history. Thanks to proportional representation, none of them has ever been punished by the vote of the electorate. Death alone puts an end to a political career in Italy.

Many of the present leaders of Italy are still relatively young but, given their uninterrupted presence on the Italian stage, seem to be of an age commanding veneration. Italy is led by a gerontocracy of men of all seasons. What "ruling class" will develop after this is one of the best-guarded mysteries of the peninsula. The parties have groomed political offspring ready to identify themselves with their vices, not their virtues.

If the strength of the Italian system is defined as the stability of the vote guaranteed by a tacit social contract between politicians and the electorate, the novelty is that that strength may be degenerating, becoming the system's major weakness. In the eyes of many, the stability of Italian politicians is seen less and less as an asset for the country and themselves, and more and more as a liability.

Having reached this disturbing conclusion, they have supported the birth of movements of pure and simple protest. Lighting the first fires of rebellion against the political system (from the "leagues" which garner votes up north by proposing to separate the north from Rome and the south, to a myriad of small parties—the "retired," the "housewives," the "automobilists," the "environmentalists," and so on), their only goal is to exploit the system of proportional representation to garner votes, to use them to reap economic benefits for themselves.

The Italian people for decades have happily attended the sumptuous banquets offered by the parties. Now, they begin to recognize that they are devouring themselves and their country. They have grown tired of looking at the same faces that for forty years have been frequenting the halls of power. The oligarchic association of Italian politicians is letting off the musty odor of ancient objects left in bureau drawers. Worried and weary, the Italian people are uncertain about what to do: on the one hand, they know that the levers of power are controlled by the politicians, that the politicians are still presumably strong enough to be able to stamp out the fires of

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rebellion; on the other, the people would like to punish the politicians who are devouring the country and its wealth but dare not rebel in any fundamental way for fear of losing what little is left of their economic privileges. Whatever the electorate decides to do, the situation they find themselves in does not change: the Italian political system, founded on proportional representation, has entered an irreversible crisis which will bring it sooner or later to its death.

If the remarkable stability of the Italian government has been converted from a strong point to an element of political crisis, there are other, no less worrisome, weak points which jeopardize the process of the creation of new wealth. Let me review a few: I will not bore the reader with numbers, tables, and graphs, but limit myself to supplying the conclusions to be drawn from statistics comparing industrial categories by the size of the work force in the principal countries of the European Community.

It becomes immediately clear that the large Italian industries—of more than 500 workers—are, beginning with Fiat, the symbol of private economy in Italy, too few in number; they are too large for Italy, too small for Europe or the world. Italy's middle-to-large industries are too few to stand up when compared with their counterparts in the rest of Europe. Finally, there are too many medium-sized, small, and very small businesses in Italy, compared with the other major EEC countries.

This uniquely structured industrial base has promoted (especially during the 1970s, a decade of great trade union agitation which risked bringing the major Italian industries to their knees) extraordinarily sophisticated forms of decentralization of industrial productivity. In these turbulent circumstances, the flexibility inherent in a system dominated by very small businesses, led by persons of imagination, may have saved the process of the production of new industrial wealth.

In 1980, above all under Fiat leadership, there was a reverse of this tendency: the aggressive trade union tide began to ebb, favoring a period of technological investments of high capital intensity, the upshot of which was the laying off of large numbers of the work force that the unions had wished not only to keep on the job, but even to increase. Taking as 100 the 1980 figure for workers employed in the major industries alone, the number shrank to 72 by the end of the decade.

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If, in the 1980s, Italian business could breathe easily because of high profits, nothing was done in those years to prepare the country for confrontation with international competition, particularly, for that plan of the continental European market deliberated by the European Community in 1985 known as the "European Single Act."

The basic structure of Italian business has not changed a whit, and it is not likely that it will be able to stand up effectively to the business world of its competitors in the European Economic Community. In addition there are other no less grave but more recent handicaps that torment Italian industry: a permanent state of undercapitalization; scarce availability of managerial personnel; high costs of labor which undercut the international competitiveness of Italian products. Net wages in many cases are lower in Italy than those of the countries of the EC, but employers have to contribute more for insurance, disability, and retirement benefits, all "siphoned off" by the state in a vain attempt to recuperate those losses sustained by the agencies which manage the national "welfare state."

An additional handicap is the inveterate reluctance of Italian industry to put down deep roots in foreign markets. In Italy, no market is regulated in such a way as to function by the most basic rules of fairness. All markets reflect favors exchanged by the major industries and the politicians. Given that experience, Italian business executives are scarcely trained to compete in countries whose markets work more naturally.

What has happened is that Italian entrepreneurs have become adept at catching a ball on the fly; in foreign markets, where they see opportunities for work and for quick profit, they often manage to outflank their slower but better-organized foreign competitors. The Italians arrive in a foreign market, grasp their prey, and bear it home like hunting dogs. They often, though not always, win in the short run but expose themselves to great risks in the long run. Thanks to these marauding habits, with few exceptions, Italian entrepreneurs have shown themselves more suited to making deals with the *nomenklatura* of communist dictatorships or with the outrageous tyrants of the countries of the Third World than with the European Community or other democracies. Meanwhile, the typical areas of competence of the large Italian industries (automobiles, rubber, chemicals, and the like) do not bring large returns to Italy. The favorable balance is to be found principally in those areas of

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competence where traditional middle and small businesses are still engaged; wood, leather, plastics, textiles, precision tools—these bring steady returns to Italy. One giant German corporation, Bayer, takes out more patents in the European Community than all the corporations of Italy. In Italian industry there is substantial productivity, but no great innovation; in the service sector there is neither.[20]

There has never developed in Italy a powerful and popular social demand for schools specialized in preparing Italians for the workplace. The authors of the famous Italian "economic miracle" did not enjoy the benefits of a modern education in business, an education useful to their work. Once rich themselves, they imagined that their children could do what they had done, needing no additional training or education.

The Italian political class has turned the teachers of the country into a reservoir of clients; it has not charged them with building a system of education that would have as its goal the development of the human resources of the country. The results have been disastrous: a dropout rate of about 50 percent of all students between the ages of 14 and 16, from whatever grade, who enter the job market without adequate training; an educational system that has become a machine where teachers produce teachers. In this way, a closed group defends (and, if it can do so, extends) the privileges granted by the political parties. If reform were started at once, it would take ten to fifteen years to bring the Italian system of education to the level of the French or the German in respect to the preparation of students for work.

Italy has entered on a demographic cycle that is perilous. The population is growing progressively older. Births are falling. If the figure of 100 is taken to describe the 15-to 29-year-old age cohort in 1980, that number is expected to drop to about 80 in the year 2003. This means that the burden of paying a national debt of 1.224 billion US dollars and the task of maintaining productivity will fall increasingly on the shoulders of a smaller number of Italians who, worse still, lack training in many of the most recent fields of advanced technology.

Eminent members of those Italians "in the know" have officially declared at least three Italian regions (Sicily with Palermo, Campania with Naples, and Calabria) as no longer effectively controlled by the public powers of the state, by constituted authority. The old Mafia, reorganized with all the accoutrements of late-twentieth-century

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crime, has established itself on the crossroads and thoroughfares of economic activity, where, with arms and threats, it exacts its tolls.

Apart from the drug trade, organized crime—for example, in the awarding of contracts for public works—confiscates public and private resources with skills cruder and more violent, more dangerous to human life, than those the political parties use, but the result is the same: national wealth is appropriated for improper purposes.

The struggle against organized crime has become increasingly difficult because, alongside the great "Mafia" families of Sicily, Calabria, and Campania, who by now work with "Tayloristic" assembly-line methods, there have come into being thousands of small artisan animals, active throughout Italy. Just as the assessor of a small town asks a construction company to hand "a little something" to his party (or to himself) for a change in the municipality's urban plan, so lower-level criminals ask for "a little something" from the local shopkeeper in exchange for a promise not to have his store burned down.

Italy is a nation-state of recent birth. Over the centuries, Italians have had to coexist with peoples who have invaded Italy, intending to get something out of it. From the Goths and the Huns of centuries ago, to the closer European neighbors who descended into Italy after 1500, the Italians are children of a culture of adaptation. They learn to live with external realities that others would find intolerable. Some rebel against organized crime, using the sacred and peaceful arms that attach to the rights of citizens. Many more have adjusted themselves to living with such violence. Because organized crime has been careful not to destroy that sense of sweetness and loveliness typical of the country, the devastation is not immediately apparent to those who still see it as the Italy of Goethe, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Henry James.

Meanwhile, the police and the judiciary seek to discover the proofs they imagine will allow them to decapitate the head of the Mafia, as Saint George once did with his dragon. They organize, unfortunately without great success, trials with hundreds of defendants. An older generation was brought up on the memory of Al Capone, jailed for tax evasion. The example is irrelevant to contemporary Italy. Is it possible that Italian criminals are thought to be angels in their dealings with the tax authorities? The mystery goes on. And so does organized crime.

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This review of critical weak points is by no means exhaustive.[21] However, it may be enough to suggest both the gravity and the danger for Italian democracy of the methods, rules, and power plays common in the "Republic of the Parties."

As Gorbachev tried in vain to reform the functioning of the institutions of the Soviet Union under the rigid control of his party, so the Italian governments throughout the 1980s—equally in vain, and certainly with less commitment than any displayed by Gorbachev—came up with projects intended to correct the faulty functioning of all the public institutions subjected to their tight control.

In fact, at the beginning of the last decade, it was patently clear that stability was stagnation, that the Italian political system was nothing other than a blocked democracy. To acknowledge the concerns of the public—and to save themselves—the parties launched a series of measures advertised as the prelude to the great reform of Italian institutions of government.

These supposedly sophisticated debates ended up nowhere; their sole beneficiaries were libraries which stocked their proceedings. Once again, it has been demonstrated that political systems—those of totalitarian dictatorships as well as of those democracies in which it has become impossible to punish politicians through the exercise of the right to vote—are incapable of self-reform.

There is no need to change the constitution, to proclaim with solemnity that the First Republic is dead, that the Second has been born. All that needs to be done is for proportional representation to be abolished, for a new electoral law to be adopted. This would require an act of Parliament, but a majority is nowhere to be found. The PCI, one of the two pillars on which the party system has rested since the postwar period, has fallen; there has been no fall of proportional representation. The Chinese Great Wall, in whose shelter the mandarins of the Italian *nomenklatura* live and prosper, remains undisturbed.

The first dangerous breach in the wall was opened by Mario Segni, a DC deputy determined to put his political and moral convictions into practice. The Italian constitution provides for referenda of popular initiative, to repeal a law or a part, if 500,000 voter signatures are collected. A modest organization was put together; Mario Segni collected the signatures and, with a referendum, proposed the abrogation of certain portions of the present electoral law.

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This would have caused irreparable damage to the edifice of proportional representation. The Constitutional Court examined the propositions and pronounced two of them inadmissible. It accepted one: the proposal that would abolish the option of giving four preferential votes to the candidates of the party of choice. If the referendum passed, it would permit the assigning of only one preferential vote. These four votes have been traditionally traded back and forth: many candidates are used to exchanging packages of preferential votes, altering the choices of the individual voter, penalizing the other candidates.

One fine Sunday in June 1991, an avalanche of "yes" votes gave the victory to Mario Segni. Sixty-two percent of the voters went to the polls, and 95.6 percent voted in favor of the single preferential. Bettino Craxi, the all-powerful secretary of the Socialist Party, had recommended to the people of Italy that they spend the weekend enjoying themselves at the beach. The head of a ruling coalition party, that is, had invited his fellow citizens not to avail themselves of one of their basic political rights, a right protected by the constitution.

On the strength of his success, Mario Segni reformulated his referendum proposals. Toward the end of 1991 he collected a million signatures, twice the number necessary to reactivate the mechanism of his referenda. Encouraged by these initiatives, Massimo Severo Giannini, a respected and august professor of law, with the help of a group of friends, collected an additional million signatures to repeal a number of the regulations that facilitate control of the economic wealth of the country by the parties.

The procedures involved in the passage of these referenda are not simple; the government will do nothing to make them easier. As a result, citizens will have to wait for two years—and then only if the Constitutional Court does not also blackball the new formula—for the Mario Segni repeal to be voted on.

With his project, Segni has thrown the parties into the water, teaching them how to swim with new strokes, according to the rules of other democracies, where two opposing forces win or lose, taking their turns at governing. The DC has come up with a counterproposal to Segni's. Aside from the happy idea of conferring stability upon governments by making the presidency of the Council of Ministers into an institution similar to the German chancellery, the DC proposes that the parties form their coalitions before the elections

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take place, that the winning coalition be assigned a modest reward of parliamentary seats in order to insure that the government remains stable for a period of time equal at least to the length of a legislative term of power. It is a step in the right direction, but the proposal has two weak points: it does not throw the parties into the water to teach them how to swim with new strokes; the DC is obliged to negotiate the proposal with parties of the coalition, thus walking into the vicious circle of the system that is supposed to be reforming itself—a path which to this day has been recognized as impracticable.

In 1991, after decades of faithful membership in the coalitions of the government, Giorgio La Malfa, son of the Republican leader who had worked with De Gasperi in the postwar period, abandoned the DC and turned to a solitary opposition, carefully avoiding a confounding of his own choice with the traditional opposition of the PDS (ex-PCI) or the protest movements, including the "leagues."

In conclusion, the last two political events have characterized an eventful year, 1991.

The president of the republic has added a crescendo to the rhythm of declarations to which he has accustomed the nation recently. What he wants is not at all obvious. The curious reader will find an excellent summary of what he says and what is said about him in a footnote.[22] If many of his statements are read in the light of common sense, it will not seem out of place to say that the president of the republic believes that the First Republic is already dead and buried, and that destiny has reserved to him the task, if not of leading the Second, at least of endowing it with his ideas. His ideas are far from clear. So long as there is a lack of precise formulation, one has every reason to nourish doubts, to advance any sort of hypotheses about the kind of republic he may be thinking of.

Bettino Craxi, the Socialist, stated in an interview that he has already decided to join up with the DC after the national elections to be held on April 5, 1992.[23] In so declaring, he revealed to the Italian people that *(a)* he does not intend for the moment to work with the PDS to fill the political void opened in the Italian Left at the disappearance of the PCI; *(b)* instead of building the foundations of a political system on the German or Anglo-Saxon model, he prefers to shut himself up with his colleagues in the governmental castle: in sum, all the parties together, indistinguishable one from the other, are to be united in relishing the delights of power.

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Such, then, are the dishes served up on the tables of Italian politics at a time when the slow crisis that has brought the Italian political system to its highest point of exhaustion and powerlessness has been rendered dramatically visible with the collapse of communism and, consequently, of the PCI. If, before, the PCI was politically useless because it was bound to Moscow, today the PDS is worthless because it commands no political identity. It can only ally itself (it makes no difference whether ideally or in fact) with the other parties shut up in the governmental castle and share in the process that is making all of them indistinguishable, one from the other. All have bargained away their political identities in exchange for the privileges and profits of power.

A story that began over a century ago is coming to an end. The kind of democracy created in 1945 (and founded on the marriage of parliamentarism and proportionalism) has entered into crisis. In contrast to 1922, there is no Mussolini with his bands of Fascists, ready to harvest the fruit of the crisis of the old liberal state. There are a number of real or presumed pretenders who seem to be ready to gather in the heritage of the First Republic, but it is likely that, no matter how deep the crisis of the parties, the oligarchic association of politicians is still powerful enough to repel the attacks of these pretenders. The walls of the castle seem strong enough to resist attacks organized with the guerrilla tactics of constitutional warfare. There is only one sort of attack they cannot resist: one carried out in the strictest legality, as in the case of the referenda proposed by Mario Segni.

There are only a few weeks to the elections, and in July Parliament will have to elect a new president of the republic. The voters appear to be uncertain; they would like to punish the parties—but not too much, not so much that they will suddenly find themselves deprived of politicians who have so generously protected their interests and showered them with favors. Among the possible (and not improbable) outcomes of the elections one must include the eventuality that the four parties (DC, PSI, Liberal, and Social Democrat) of the present coalition will not reach the 50 percent-plus-one of valid votes cast. In that case the formation of a coalition will depend on the PRI and the political conditions that it chooses to dictate.

No matter how many conjectures one may wish to make about the fate of the Italian political system in the near future, one thing alone

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is clear: Italy is face-to-face with a crucial political decision. Once the choice has been made, there can be no turning back for some years to come.

At stake is the form of democracy that Italy must choose from among the several at its disposal. In the West, despite all difficulties, countries tend to adopt models of democracy that do not fundamentally disavow the famous formula of "government by the people, and for the people." The Italian form has gone against this tendency until now, and the results are obvious. The situation is not only that an arrogant band of oligarchs have cultivated their own interests under the protection of an electoral law of proportional distribution; there is also the country out there—a country whose administration has yet to learn to respond to the demands of its citizens, to offer services more or less equal to those delivered by the bureaucracies of the nations of the West. This is a country whose support of the European Community has too often been little more than an exercise in rhetoric; it is a country whose international policies have too often been fouled by the claims of domestic politics.[24]

The more that the form of democracy the Italians choose to give themselves in the next two or three years remains distant from the formula of "government by the people," the less likely it is that Italy will be able to make concrete, responsible contributions to the development of the EC, at least as planned at Maastricht in December of 1991. And, to that same extent, if it fails to make fundamental reforms, it will be unable to perform its duties as a member of the Atlantic Alliance in an incredibly volatile international situation which will require unity among the countries of Europe and North America.

Angelo Panebianco has projected "four scenarios for Italy in the year two thousand."[25] In the first, Italy becomes a "Continental European Country": it is on the road to accommodating its economic and financial policies to those of its partners in the European Community; to becoming a political democracy like that of the Western democracies. In the second, Italy falls victim to an illness of the "Argentine syndrome": the advent of a nationalist-populist regime, led by a charismatic personality. Panebianco repeats the formula Samuel Huntington coined for certain South American regimes: "radical pretorianism."

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Panebianco sketches two more gray-colored intermediate scenarios. In the first, the Italian political class, thanks to favorable circumstances, manages to mitigate the impact of all manner of impending disasters through skillful negotiation, and succeeds in remaining hitched to the European cart. The "gray democracy" referred to in 1974, when I wrote the introduction to *Il caso italiano,* would survive.[26] The second is closer to "the Argentine syndrome" except that Italy is spared certain of the more drastic catastrophes because the European Community (and, more broadly, the West) decide to grant Italy the special status of "a country receiving assistance." Such a status, in Panebianco's view, "on the one hand further weakens a sick, almost non-competitive economy and, on the other, amortizes the most negative consequences of the crisis."[27]

Should this last scenario come to pass, with its eventual European intervention, intending to save Italy from other less desirable political developments, there would be no fundamental resolution of the Italian crisis. The country, after more than a century, would not be moved toward less anomalous forms of democracy; it would leave unresolved the problems of national identity; the political loyalties of the citizenry would remain uncertain.

For those who love Italy, the joy one must feel at the end of the false revolution of 1917 is diminished by the fact that the exit from communism has shed a curious and penetrating light on the crisis that was already corroding the structure of the Italian political system. With the end of communism has come the end of a period of Italian history in which certain exceptional political situations, common since 1945, have been allowed to continue encouraging weak and precarious, though sophisticated, compromises.

The Italians—but also their leaders—are today deprived of all those alibis or excuses that have allowed them to avoid taking a stand, refusing to make decisions. Naked and alone—with their responsibilities—they are required to act.

Translated by
Elaine Maclachlan

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to declare my debt to the authors cited in these notes and to thank them for helping me unravel the threads of the knotty and tangled Italian skein. Obviously, the fault is mine if mistakes have been made. I dedicate these pages to Senator Nino Andreatta, Professor of Economics, because he has never forgotten, amid political commitment and intellectual adventure, that friendship lives apart from reasons of personal interest.

ENDNOTES

[1]Roberto Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991), vol. 2, 651–52.

[2]Vivarelli, vol. 2, 704.

[3]Vivarelli, vol. 2, 365.

[4]Giorgio Galli, *Il Bipartitismo imperfetto* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1966), 64ff.

[5]In these pages I will not be dealing with the terrorism which bloodied Italy, especially in the 1970s. It seriously threatened the stability of the Italian political regime, especially at the time of the assassination of Aldo Moro, leader of the Christian Democratic Party. Although it was recognized very late that terrorism was an attack on democracy from the left, there is no doubt that the Italian Communist Party defended the institutions of the republic at this time. It is clear also that by defending them it was also defending itself from an ideological and revolutionary movement of the left. Once again, it was demonstrating how very deep were the roots of "politics as Utopia" and the "culture of revolution" in Italy. Basically, the Italian parties saved the republic, but they also saved themselves: terrorism, in sum, reinforced the governance of the parties and inspired in the Italian people a debt of gratitude toward the parties, a debt many thought totally undeserved.

[6] My thanks to Massimo Teodori for allowing me to read the manuscript of his forthcoming book, *Modello americano e Costituzione italiana* (Milan: Sperling & Kupfer, 1992) (forthcoming).

[7]Pietro Scoppola, *La Repubblica dei partiti, Profilo storico della democrazia in Italia (1945–1990)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991).

[8]Scoppola, 198.

[9]Vivarelli, vol. 2, 7.

[10]As a matter of fact, the constitution also created regional governmental entities, corresponding to the historic Italian regions, from Lombardy to Calabria, and made provision for a major decentralization of the functions of the central national administration. The regions, however, were not instituted until twenty

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years after the constitution became the law of the land, and the various parties were immediately successful in getting them to submit to their system of power. The state has remained centralized; the regions are merely another layer added to its hierarchical organization.

[11]Scoppola, 197–207.

[12]Alexis de Tocqueville, *De la Démocratie en Amérique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), vol. 1, 309.

[13]Vivarelli, vol. 2: 466.

[14]Scoppola, 19–29.

[15]This quote and subsequent quotes found before endnote 16 of the text may be found in Scoppola, 19–29.

[16]Fabio Luca Cavazza, "Logica italiana della sicurezza," in Fabio Luca Cavazza and Stephen R. Graubard, eds., *Il caso italiano* (Milan: Garzanti, 1974), 16.

[17]Cavazza, 16. The *leggine*, the "little laws," are as a rule approved by parliamentary commissions. They serve to affix the stamp of the will of the people on favors granted by the parties to special categories of citizens, or, indeed, to the private interests of individuals. The *leggine* are tokens of exchange value among the parties in relation to their respective percentages in the share of power.

[18]Roberto Cartocci, *Elettori in Italia* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990). See especially chapter four, entitled "La diffusione del voto di scambio." It is a practice that has spread throughout Italy, but with greatest intensity south of the Grosseto–Ascoli Piceno line.

[19]Fabio Luca Cavazza, "Italy's TV: From Party Occupation to Party Partition," in Anthony Smith, ed., *Television and Political Life in Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1979).

[20]See the Italian edition of *Fortune* magazine, 7–8 (July-August 1991). Bayer presented 605 requests for patents to the European Patent Office of the EEC as against 550 from all Italian companies. I am indebted to Luigi Campiglio for this reference. He is one of a group of friends (Enzo Balboni, Edmondo Berselli, Lorenzo Ornaghi, and V. E. Parsi) with whom I have met periodically over the last months to prepare a total revision (and updating) of the book cited in note 16. Many of the themes discussed in this article were debated at our meetings.

[21]I have purposely refrained from including in my review of the weak points of the Italian political system the terrible episodes that have drenched Italy in blood: bombs placed in banks, railroad stations, trains, and city squares during political demonstrations. These have killed hundreds of innocent victims, chosen at random by the murdering hands of minds no longer capable of reason. It has been a veritable case of mass terrorism, to place alongside the terrorism that was directed at specific individuals, from humble government workers like police or prison guards to leaders like Aldo Moro. I do not know if this is the same terrorism, or two terrorisms that can be differentiated by ideology and political objectives. I do not know, do not even care to know. I know only two things: almost all the crimes of mass terrorism have remained unpunished; in the course of the investigations, and later in newspaper stories, we have witnessed a procession of the extraordinary and incongruous individuals, from youth of

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middle class extraction who adored violence to no-account swindlers looking for money and protection, to members of the armed forces, more or less employed in the so-called "services," who really should, ex-officio, be seen to belong to the category of those who serve the state. It has been a disgusting exercise of the applications of the theory of conspiracy: like Russian dolls, one conspiracy contained the next, and so on, to infinity. The result was dust and confusion, desperation, and lack of confidence. We can rejoice in the fact that Italy has survived so many horrors and that it is still today a country where basic freedoms exist. But we must say that Italian terrorism, in its various guises, has confirmed the centuries-old diffidence of the Italian people for their public institutions, and their tendency to lump all political systems together. One is the same as another; none is to be preferred; the end of all of them is to wreak havoc on the poor and humiliated private citizen.

[22] Alexander Stille, "Has inmate taken over the asylum in Italian politics?" *Globe and Mail* (Toronto) reproduced in the *Washington Times*, Washington, D.C. 6 December 1991: "Over the course of a few days. . . President Francesco Cossiga threatened to resign, to dissolve the parliament and to arrest leaders of the country's judiciary. Then he went to television and told the nation he was taking a 'pick-ax' to the political system in order to rebuild it. . . .His behavior has been so mercurial that many believe he is mentally ill. . . . Moreover, while Mr. Cossiga has seemed to lose control, he has gained popularity with polls consistently showing a high level of approval for his unorthodox behavior. For mad or sane, Mr. Cossiga has begun to speak important truth . . . [attacking] . . . the corruption of (the Italian) parties and collusion between the Mafia and important political leaders. . . .Mr. Cossiga says he has pretended to be crazy in order to shake the system out of its paralysis. 'In any normal country, they would have kicked me out by now. Does this seem a normal country?' he asks (in an interview published as his biography). . . . The Cossiga case has become a kind of Italian national psychodrama, with people divided over whether he is a courageous reformer or simply a madman. 'He wants to make us believe that he is astutely using Cossiga-The-Madman to further a political plan, but there is strong suspicion that the Reformer-President is just a respectable cover for Cossiga-The-Madman to express himself in all his virulence,' wrote Arrigo Levi in an editorial of the newspaper *L'Indipendente*. . . .Mr. Cossiga's former colleagues are showing signs of impatience: 'If he does not resign, the only other option is for someone to remove him in a straitjacket,' said Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, an important Christian Democratic leader in a recent interview."

[23] Arrigo Levi, "Il Governo; Poi, l'unita socialista," *L'Indipendente*, Milano, 15 November 1991.

[24] Sergio Romano, "Strappata la foto di gruppo," *La Stampa*, 14 January 1992. Sergio Romano writes, "It is not by chance that Italy has always paid careful attention to its relations with the Soviet Union, the Arab world, and the Third World. The *strategia dell'attenzione'* toward the communist and anti-West worlds often carried the meaning and intent of a friendly signal to the companions

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of the CLN." (The CLN was the Committee of National Liberation formed in the years of the Second World War by the antifascist parties: with this reference the author is alluding to the "companions" of the parties of the left belonging to the CLN, first among them the Communists.)

[25]Angelo Panebianco, "Gioco di simulazione. Quattro scenari per il Duemila," in *Il Mulino*, vol. XL, 6 (November-December) 1991, 1015–21.

[26]Fabio Luca Cavazza, "Logica italiana della sicurezza" in Cavazza and Graubard, eds., *Il Caso Italiano* (Milan: Garzanti, 1974), 28.

[27]Angelo Panebianco, 1020.

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The ancients who wished to illuminate "illuminating virtue" all under Heaven first governed their states. Wishing to govern their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their personal lives. Wishing to cultivate their personal lives, they first rectified their hearts and minds. Wishing to rectify their hearts and minds, they first authenticated their intentions. Wishing to authenticate their intentions, they first refined their knowledge. The refinement of knowledge lay in the study of things. For only when things are studied is knowledge refined; only when knowledge is refined are intentions authentic; only when intentions are authentic are hearts and minds rectified; only when hearts and minds are rectified are personal lives cultivated; only when personal lives are cultivated are families regulated; only when familes are regulated are states governed; only when states are governed is there peace all under Heaven. Therefore, from the Son of Heaven to the common people, all, without exception, must take self-cultivation as the root.

—The Great Learning

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Tu Wei-ming

Intellectual Effervescence in China[1]

THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE UNION of the Soviet Socialist Republics and the reintegration of the European Community pose intriguing questions about the new world order. The apparent triumph of the market economy and democratic polity may suggest that the bitter struggle between capitalism and socialism is ending. The emergence of a victorious West signals the end of the Cold War. The simple military victory in the Gulf War may have enhanced the impression that the United States, the unrivaled leader of the Western world, is now the most powerful shaper of the new world order. Yet, the euphoria that a real *Pax Americana* is upon us was short-lived. Prevailing in American academic institutions, politics, and business is a critical awareness that, despite our military power, our ability to organize a safe, just, and benevolent United States is sapped. The solemn realization that there are no quick fixes for our problems in education, economy, crime, drugs, race relations, welfare, child care, and health instills a strong sense of vulnerability, if not helplessness, in our national psyche. The questions of our own physical and mental well-being, our willingness to take care of the poor, the aged, and the less fortunate, our desire to free ourselves and our loved ones from drugs and crime, our concern for minority rights, our commitment to providing for the young and the innocent, our ability to revitalize our means of production, and our determination to effectively teach basic subjects (English and mathematics) in elementary and secondary schools loom large in our hearts and minds. Underlying these worries about things at hand is a powerful

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logic that unless we put our own house in order, it is presumptuous and foolhearted for us to talk about global leadership.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND GLOBAL CONSCIOUSNESS

However, while we recognize that superior military technology cannot be readily applied to other areas vital to our security and prosperity, such as the reduction of racial tension and the improvement of secondary education, we take it for granted that our form of life represents the most advanced stage of human flourishing to date. Our faith in the self-generating and ever-expanding dynamism of the economy may have been lost, but our position as the most voluminous producer in the world still allows us the greatest capacity to define the parameters of international trade. Our trust in political leadership may have declined at both state and national levels, but our conviction that the American system of government is a source of inspiration for all aspiring democracies has not been shaken. Moreover, while the idea of the "melting pot" may be outmoded, our assumption that American society is the most hospitable and opportune for immigrants is still valid. We fully acknowledge that the spread of American mass culture is at best a mixed blessing, but we strongly believe that what America symbolizes in cultural terms is innovation rather than stagnation, freedom rather than oppression, greater equality rather than injustice.

Surely, the rights of the individual, free enterprise, the market system, equal opportunity, competition in the private sector, progressive taxation, and self-reliance are all integral parts of the American belief system. Still, Americans believe in more than market economy. The American belief in "personal mobility and the free flow of ideas," in "an openness of spirit and a range of possibility unheard of anywhere at anytime in history," and in "the proposition that self-government was possible among monarchies and dictatorships"[2] remains a standard of inspiration for the rest of the world. The tacit assumption of the American public that what we have is what the overwhelming majority of the human race wants and strives to achieve is not groundless.

The modernizing process that originated in Western Europe and reached its apex in North America in recent decades has been the most powerful facilitator of universalization and homogenization the

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world has ever witnessed. Virtually all major spheres of interest characteristic of contemporary civilization are indebted to this process: science, technology, transportation, mass communication, market economy, democratic institutions, multinational corporations, and research universities, just to mention a few. The values that underlie these spheres of interest, notably liberties, human rights, and due process of law, are also rooted in the Enlightenment of the modern West. The American way, as the paradigmatic unfolding of Westernization, is often perceived as the wave of the future for humanity as a whole.

A persistent theme in the American way is the affirmation of ordinary life. As an astute Chinese thinker observed some time ago, although the United States has yet to produce great philosophers, its constitutional framers, guided by pragmatic idealism, established an awe-inspiring political system unprecedented in its ability to adapt to new circumstances without losing sight of its inner identity and consistency. Indeed, "the genius of the Founders was to construct a system in which participation could be broadened and each generation could create America anew."[3] This idea of the American way as a joint venture, a great experiment, may have undermined its Puritan roots, but what it symbolizes is, at least on the surface, in accord with what Charles Taylor proposes:

> The notion that there is a certain dignity and worth in this life requires a contrast; no longer, indeed, between this life and some "higher" activity like contemplation, war, active citizenship, or heroic asceticism, but now lying between different ways of living the life of production and reproduction. The notion is never *whatever* we do is acceptable. This would be unintelligible as the basis for a notion of dignity. Rather the key point is that the higher is to be found not outside of but as a *manner of living ordinary life*.[4]

Specifically, what the American way demonstrates is a mode of human flourishing that is a fulfillment of rather than a departure from ordinary life. The modest American dream of owning a comfortable car and a spacious house, earning a fair wage, and enjoying the freedom of movement, travel, assembly, speech, and privacy seems reasonable as a legitimate modern demand. We would expect that people in Bonn, Paris, and London, in fact Tokyo, Seoul, Taipei, Hong Kong, and Singapore, even Moscow, Beijing, and New Delhi see the reasonableness of this modest American dream.

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Obviously, the caveat is how costly this seemingly legitimate modern demand has been and how incredibly difficult it is to imagine the plausibility, let alone the realizability, of this dream in a global context. The dramatic changes throughout the world do not at all bear out the truthfulness of our vision. Rather, they compel us to reflect upon the precariousness of our situation. The disintegration of the USSR shows *inter alia* the need for much more sophisticated conceptual resources than we currently have in economics, political science, sociology, and cultural studies to understand, not to mention provide guidance for, the emergence of a new geopolitical universe loaded with deadly weapons and destructive forces. The reintegration of the European Community clearly signals a new pattern of competitiveness in international trade and world politics. If we broaden our scope to recognize other parts of the world, the inadequacy of our model for modernity becomes even more obvious. We do well to put our own house in order, for, needless to say, it is increasingly unrealistic for even a fraction of our fellow Americans, including our sons and daughters, to live up to the modest American dream.

As we extend our vision beyond the horizon of our local knowledge, the untenability of our manner of living ordinary life becomes abundantly clear. The sense of crisis confronting our human community, occasioned not only by the internecine warfare flaring up here and there but also by the steady depletion of natural resources and the seemingly irreversible decline of our life-support system, raises serious doubts about our viability as a species. This indisputable fact alone evokes the distinct sensation that we are but fellow travelers in an endangered lifeboat. The graphic vision of the blue earth in the vast uncharted sea of galaxies is no longer an imagined possibility but a lived reality continuously ingrained in our mind's eye by the stunningly beautiful pictures taken by astronauts. For the first time in human history, we can claim that we know comprehensively the boundaries of our habitat, including the thickness of the air surrounding our planet. And we observe in awe the fullness and vulnerability of our common property. It is a salutary lesson to learn that our reasonable quest for a legitimate modern style of living has made us individually and collectively the most dangerous polluter, the most irresponsible squanderer, and the most wasteful spender of natural and human resources the world has ever encountered.

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It is not at all surprising that part of our Western heritage is being relegated to the background. The Faustian drive to explore, conquer, and subdue has lost much of its persuasive force as our ecological knowledge enhances our sensitivity to the need for a harmonious human relationship with nature. In light of the newly emerging concerns for biodiversity and the environment, the tacitly accepted ideology for unlimited progress informed by such doctrines as social Darwinism with its pernicious anthropocentric competitiveness is no longer convincing or even reasonable. The utilitarian application of instrumental rationality and the Marxist advocacy of the humanization of nature have both led to unintended negative consequences for the human habitat. Even the biblical assertion that we "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth"[5] is called into question. The sanctity of the earth as a supreme value looms large in interreligious dialogue, and the Green movement has been gaining strength worldwide.

The recognition that we are embedded earthlings, that our ordinary secular life is sacred, and that the ultimate meaning of human existence is to be realized through our practical daily living offers us a fresh perspective on the human condition. The lower life of "sloth, irrationality, slavery, or alienation," as instructed by the reformers, classical utilitarians, abolitionists, or Marxists, still serves as a negative example in our ethics.[6] The higher life, the admirable good life, must now be informed by a new vision, a vision that was not even a rejected possibility in theology, instrumental rationality, Enlightenment mentality, or dialectical materialism a few decades ago. The rich texture of our ethical reflection, interwoven by local knowledge and global consciousness, provides a complex background for understanding intellectual effervescence in socialist China.

MODERNIZATION AS A CONTESTED DISCOURSE

Talcott Parsons in the 1970s defined modernity in terms of three inseparable dimensions: the market economy, democratic polity, and individualism.[7] In retrospect, we may interpret the Parsonian thesis as based on a questionable assumption, namely, that the genetic reasons for West European and North American societies to become modern were prematurely identified. The structural reason for their moder-

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nity was converted by Parsons into a universal category. Indeed, Parsons may have had only the United States in mind when he specified these three dimensions as the defining characteristics of modernity. Thus, what the United States actually achieved in its modern transformation was generalized as an "ideal type" for other societies to emulate. It may be important to note also that the kind of America that informed Parsons was a cultural construct laden with ideological implications of the liberal-democratic persuasion. The contrast with the socialist system is too sharp to be accidental: planned economy, centralized polity, and collectivism. Modernity, in this sense, is neither traditional nor socialist. Rather it is capitalist America defined in liberal-democratic terms.

We could of course take a cynical view, as the French intellectual Pierre Nora did when he wrote about structural functionalism, still very much in vogue in the United States at the time; he said: "In sociology, Talcott Parsons and his school seemed to be raising a monument to American self-justification, a theory of social harmony, a closed system of social and national integration."[8] However, this Parsonian determination to present an American vision of modernization is predicated on a comparative civilizational perspective succinctly articulated by S. N. Eisenstadt:

> The processes of modernization are, therefore, unique in comparison with other historical movements of change, because they have been grounded on the assumption that it is possible to create a new sociopolitical order, an order based on premises of universalism and equality. The spread of these attitudes has led to far-reaching changes in societal structure and organization, especially in the economic and political spheres. Modernization has taken place throughout the world through a series of social, political, and cultural movements that, unlike movements of change and rebellion in many other historical situations, have tended to combine orientations of protest and those of center-formation and institution-building. It has fostered the establishment of a universal civilization in which different societies have served one another as mutual reference points. A society judges both itself and others in relation to these premises of universalism and equality.[9]

Parsons may have been idiosyncratic in defining modernization in parochial American terms, but, in light of Eisenstadt's insight, the Parsonian reading of the specific features of "these premises of universalism and equality" is still heuristically significant.

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The disintegration of the USSR and the reintegration of the European Community, easily perceived as the failure of communism and the triumph of capitalism, seem to suggest that Parsons' advocacy of the American way is right after all. Planned economy must be replaced by market economy, centralized bureaucracy must be superseded by democratic polity and, by implication, collectivism must be supplanted by individualism. However, the displacement of socialism by capitalism as an inevitable consequence of modernization, defined in American terms, is too neat to be true. For one thing, Eisenstadt's "universalism and equality" do not at all specify the American way as the only means to fulfill these premises. The question of "tradition" as a resource as well as a constraint in the modernizing process features prominently in Eisenstadt's conception of modernizing nations serving as "mutual reference points" to one another.

The Western European situation is quite illustrative in this sense. Revolutionary France, obsessed with her language and culture, tradition-bound England, and nationalist Germany signify such different approaches to modernization; they suggest that the message of the modern Western Enlightenment is pregnant with fruitful ambiguities. "Liberty, equality, and fraternity," for example, do not cohere as an integrated value system recommending a coordinated ethical course of action. In both theory and practice, liberty and equality are in conflict or, at least, in creative tension. Many liberal-minded thinkers, notably Friedrich von Hayek, are highly critical of the principle of equality, and, by implication, of democratic practices inspired by egalitarianism.[10] On the other hand, the demand for welfare, ostensibly to soften the edges of free enterprise, in England and the United States has shaken the foundation of classical liberalism (which now prefers to define itself as self-referential conservatism). By contrast, strictly speaking, among the modern Western democracies, only America has developed a full-fledged civil society. This was part of the reason that Alexis de Tocqueville observed with amazement the strengths and pitfalls of democracy in America. The sense of radical otherness that he experienced in studying how the political system functioned in the United States symbolizes the diversity in Western democracy.

Notwithstanding that diversity in the modern West (in which the United States styles itself as a super-Europe), to the contemporary

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Chinese intellectual, the model of modernity it offers and the process of modernization it suggests are deceptively simple. Undeniably, market economy and democratic polity have been the foci of the open-door policy in China since 1979. Deng Xiaoping's strategy of liberalizing the planned economy by a limited use of the market mechanism was at odds with his critics' insistence that political reform must be an integral part, if not a precondition, of economic reform. Wei Jingsheng, a sophisticated worker-intellectual, eloquently argued that modernizing agriculture, industry, science and technology, and military hardware (the so-called Four Modernizations), without democratization (the Fifth Modernization), was doomed to failure.[11] His prophetic voice angered Deng, who, frustrated by the ill-conceived military expedition against Vietnam, and humiliated by the Xidan Democracy Wall in the spring of 1979, decided to forge ahead with economic reform without much compromise on the political front. Wei was arrested and sentenced to a fifteen-year imprisonment. The schizophrenic policy of bold initiatives in economic reform and fundamentalist adherence to the Four Cardinal Principles (adherence to the socialist path, the leadership of the Communist Party, Marxism–Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought, and the people's democratic dictatorship) characterized Deng's attempt to have *glasnost* without *perestroika*.

The stunning success of the agricultural reform which generated much economic dynamism in rural China, notably in the Yangtze delta and the Canton region, in the early 1980s enabled the forward-looking intellectuals (many of them high Party officials) to opt for a basic reorientation in ideology and, possibly, a fundamental restructuring of the political system. On the occasion of the centennial of Karl Marx's death (March 14, 1983), the report delivered by the highly respected scholar-official Zhou Yang openly advocated Marxist humanism and formally raised the issue of alienation in the socialist society. This so provoked orthodox ideologists such as Deng Liquan and Hu Qiaomu that they persuaded Deng Xiaoping to launch a nationwide Anti–Spiritual Pollution campaign. Although the campaign itself lasted for only twenty-eight days, the oppressive ethos which stigmatized sensitive ideological and political topics continued for months.[12]

Yet, for the next four years, under the leadership of Party Secretary-General Hu Yaobang, with the support of Premier Zhao Ziyang

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and, at least, the tacit consent of Deng Xiaoping, China experienced an intellectual openness unprecedented since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. The two mountains—traditional feudalism and bourgeois imperialism—thought to have been smashed by the mighty current of Marxist-Leninist socialism reemerged as Confucian humanism and democratic liberalism. Within the Marxist circle, significantly different voices were heard as Yu Quangyuan, Wang Ruoshui, Shu Shaozhi, Li Shu, and Li Honglin began to articulate their own interpretations of the socialist message.[13] The fluidity of the marketplace of ideas was such that virtually the whole range of modern Western thought found a receptive audience in China's institutes of higher learning. Some of the most liberal-minded intellectuals staffed a few of the traditionally most vital ideological organs: for example, the "theory division" (*lilunbu*) of the *People's Daily,* the Marxist and Leninist Institute in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Department of Philosophy at Peking University.

The issues, heatedly debated with real policy implications in this period, included some of the most sacrosanct in the economy and polity. Commercial enterprises in socialism, the marketization of the socialist economy, the pluralization of ownership, entrepreneurship, and the privatization of property figured among the economic ones; dogmatism in Marxist thought, democratization of the Chinese Communist Party, anti-feudal dictatorship, political pluralism, election, the legitimacy of private interests, and due process of law were among the political ones.[14] On December 7, 1984, the *People's Daily* startled China watchers all over the world with the editorial statement that "we cannot ask the writings of Marx and Lenin to solve *all* our current problems."[15] The carefully inserted qualified "all," alleged to have been absent in the original version, did not dilute the strong impression that China was ideologically prepared to leave the socialist camp.

The Sino-British accord on Hong Kong, Beijing's perceived flexibility vis-à-vis the Taiwan question, and the major effort in sending students abroad, inviting American and European lecturers in the social sciences and humanities to deliver talks to packed auditoriums, scholarly communication with advanced industrial societies, the promotion of tourism, foreign investment, and international trade all seemed to point to a basic ideological reorientation. Given the

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intellectual atmosphere, it was not farfetched to imagine then that China would be the first socialist country to make its exit from communism. Indeed, the newly arrived students from the USSR were astonished at the freedom that the Chinese students enjoyed in 1985. The Russian students observed with envy the obvious achievements in Chinese reform.[16]

Student demonstrations, mainly at the Science and Technology University in Hofei, provided a rare opportunity for the orthodox ideologists to close ranks and form a "united front" against Hu Yaobang in the winter of 1986. Without the approval of Deng Xiaoping and the acquiescence of Zhao Ziyang, this could not have happened. One may surmise that while Hu was convinced that a basic ideological reorientation was in order, that a fundamental restructuring of the political system was probably necessary, Zhao shared Deng's wishful thinking that socialist China could benefit from the market economy without adopting the Western-style democratic polity. They, either by choice or by default, played into the hands of the orthodox ideologists, who by then considered Bourgeois Liberalization the most serious threat to Chinese socialism. In retrospect, student demonstrations were the result of a combination of several disparate factors: anti-Japanese patriotism, moral indignation against corruption, a demand for government accountability, dissatisfaction with their own living conditions, racist friction with foreign students (especially those from African countries), impatience with political reform, and a sense of relative deprivation as they became acquainted with styles of conspicuous consumption common in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons (Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore), not to mention Western Europe and North America.

Underlying these factors was the emergence of a new phenomenon in socialist China, readily understandable in traditional Chinese perspective, but difficult to comprehend in the context of four decades of Chinese communist rule, namely the communal critical self-consciousness of the intelligentsia. Although Hu Yaobang became the casualty of the short-lived Anti–Bourgeois Liberalization campaign in early 1987, his death two years later was "as weighty as the majestic Mount Tai."[17] The epoch-making event in the square of the Gate of Heavenly Peace (Tiananmen) in the spring of 1989,

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occasioned by Hu's unexpected death, was a brilliant expression of this communal critical self-consciousness.

Nevertheless, as we have noted, the implicit assumption that China's modernization had to follow the pattern characterized by the inseparability of the market economy, democratic polity, and individualism is highly problematical. It is more than a question of disaggregating the three dimensions of modernity; given the divergent paths of democratization in the modern West, the question of whether or not there is an authentic possibility of a Chinese-style democracy is very alive. In light of Eisenstadt's insight, could the premises of universalism and equality be located somewhere else besides the market economy, democratic polity, and individualism, as the Parsonian thesis specified? For instance, could fraternity as well as liberty and equality be recognized as a major focus of the modernizing effort?

COMMUNITY IN CRISIS

It is possible that modernization theory, as a view of the future, may have given a highly condensed and thus necessarily limited interpretation of the past. To the American modernists, the Enlightenment signified mainly the liberation of the human spirit, guided by instrumental rationality, for the purpose of transforming the world into an "affluent society" without ideology. The Western European Enlightenment, as Ernest Gellner notes, involves both a British style stressing empiricism and skepticism, but also a French style drawn to anticlericalism.[18] Furthermore, the universalist and liberal-democratic impulse of the American modernists led them to underestimate the vital importance of perennial human institutions, notably the family, but also clan, kinship, neighborhood, and religious associations. Intent on developing a set of generalizable criteria for measuring degrees of modernization, they were also oblivious to cultural diversity.

As a result, they failed to predict the enduring presence of human networking, defined in terms of primordial ties such as ethnicity, gender, language, ancestral home, class, and religious faith, in highly industrialized societies as well as in developing countries. Racial tension in the United States, language conflict in Canada and Belgium, the struggle for indigenous people's rights in North America, feminist movements throughout the Western world, and the

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ubiquitous specter of religious fundamentalism are all salient features of the modern West, but one of the implications of the modernist project is that what America symbolizes is the unlimited transformative potential for developing New Liberty, New Freedom, New Nationalism, a New Frontier, and, more recently, the Great Society, embracing a new structure of world order.

Paradoxically, the American sense of newness is deeply rooted in a historical consciousness which often invokes the promises of the Founding Fathers. When Chinese intellectuals, especially zealous university students, rediscovered America in the 1980s, they were obsessed with the future of China. As a response to the dismissal of Hu Yaobang, a six-part television series was produced by a talented team of young reformers, who straightforwardly announced the death of the Yellow River culture (which implies the backwardness of China) and advocated the moral imperative for the Chinese intelligentsia to embrace the culture of the Blue Ocean (which symbolizes the modern West). Aired twice on the nationwide network to millions of peasants, workers, soldiers as well as bureaucrats and intellectuals in 1987, *He Shang* (The River Elegy) set the cultural agenda for an unprecedented national debate: "Whither China?". The message was startlingly unambiguous: neither Confucianism nor socialism can save China; in fact, the confluence of the feudal past (Confucian authoritarianism) and the socialist present (Stalinist dictatorship) is the main reason that China has been drowning. Seasoned Westernized intellectuals were invited to embark on a rescue mission. Together with democracy-minded officials and market-oriented entrepreneurs, they could eventually be expected to form a "middle class" that would guide China toward modernity.

Tacitly encouraged by Zhao Ziyang, "The River Elegy" was a cultural essay, intended to serve the dual purpose of articulating the impatience of the young and exposing the inertia of the octogenarian orthodox ideologists. The hidden agenda, though not very well disguised, was a call for a concerted effort to work against the ossified Party apparatus by rallying around Zhao and his "think tank," all in the name of a fresh start. The angry response to the message by the old guard, led by men like General Wang Zhen, eventually forced the series to be banned; ironically, however, it helped "The River Elegy" to receive unusually high critical acclaim among intellectuals. The alienation of the intelligentsia from the power holders of the Party

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became enhanced when certain very vocal critics of the Marxist orthodoxy were forced to resign their Party membership in late 1987. The bifurcation of political power and intellectual influence was an initial sign that the independence of the intelligentsia was perhaps in the offing. The conscientious reporter Liu Binyan and the judicious theoretician Wang Ruoshui became celebrities in academic, intellectual, and cultural circles as soon as word circulated that they had been ostracized from the Party. Deng Liquan, in contrast, had difficulty recruiting writers for his ideological team, despite his direct access to power at the center.

In a political culture with a strong civil society tradition, in which the adversarial system is prominent, the bifurcation of power and influence is both desirable and normal. Small wonder, then, that it is difficult for us to discern the significance of the seemingly minor rift in the Marxist camp. After the event, both Liu Binyan and Wang Ruoshui acknowledged that their assertions of independent-mindedness occurred only as recently as 1984.[19] Before then, it was inconceivable for either to have embarked on an interpretive course divergent from and threatening to the Party line, despite a certain obvious new latitude in ideological discussion. The thought of an alternative intelligence, a fundamentally different way of reading the Marxist message, was unimaginable. One could of course challenge the applicability of Marxist historiography to the Chinese situation as Li Shu ingeniously did in a series of articles in the *Lishiyanjiu* (Historical Study). One could also raise serious doubts about the reasonableness of certain basic Marxist precepts, such as the class struggle, which quite a number of scholars did in learned journals. One could even cite Marx to support one's non-Marxist viewpoints, claiming, paradoxically, that a true fellow of Karl Marx need not be a Marxist. Nevertheless, it was an entirely different matter to challenge the authority of the Party as the real arbiter of ideological disputes.

In fact, the infallibility of the Party was totally exploded during the ten disastrous years of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). Still, Party discipline was religiously observed by those scholar-officials holding responsible positions in government, the mass media, and institutes of higher learning. The Party began to recruit a number of the most brilliant minds from the intellectual community (including those denounced as rightists in the 1950s), reversing the long-term

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policy of the 1970s, with its discrimination against intellectuals in favor of peasants, workers, and soldiers. By the mid-1980s, a new dynamism and optimism emerged among the intelligentsia, engendered principally by the open policy of the Party under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. Intellectuals were vigorously mobilized and many participated enthusiastically in the effort to chart China's course toward modernization. This seemingly incredible turn of events must be seen against the backdrop of the role of the intellectual in socialist China. Despite the repeated campaigns against the so-called feudal mentality and bourgeois tendency of the intelligentsia, the political power of the Chinese intellectual through the exercise of its ideological influence has never waned.

Mao Zedong was acutely aware of this. While he is known for his realism—"Political power grows out of the barrel of the gun"[20]—he deliberately cultivated his ideological power in the hope that his ideas would be embraced by the masses, despite the protest of the sophisticated intellectuals, and serve as a guiding principle for China's development. While he may have totally miscalculated the matter, his launching of the Cultural Revolution was intimately related to his desire to remain continuously relevant to, indeed vital to, China's modernization. Ironically, the most recent verdict on the validity of Mao Zedong's Thought was determined by the principle of *praxis*, enunciated by a group of reform-minded intellectuals. Chinese intellectuals, whether or not directly accessible to power at the center, remain politically consequential. Their self-definition demanded that they remain politically relevant. Mao, in this sense, was caught in the syndrome common to all Chinese intellectuals since the mid-nineteenth century.

For Chinese intellectuals, the decline and fall of China as a civilization-state in a matter of decades is akin to the experience of the Holocaust for the Jews, a constant reminder of their weakness, humiliation, guilt, and responsibility. The sense of urgency and the psychology of uncertainty, intertwined with an acute awareness that one's own fate is inextricably tied to the destiny of the nation, have caused political questions to predominate over all other interests in the perpetual Chinese intellectual search for self-definition. The overwhelming demand for relevance, participation, and activism which characterized the Chinese intellectual ethos for the first half of the twentieth century, was prompted by a strong sense of guilt.

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Chinese intellectuals accepted their responsibility not only to raise the consciousness of the general public but also to function as the vanguards for "saving the nation" through direct participation in reform and revolution. As a consequence of this inevitable politicization of the culture, the intelligentsia marginalized themselves.

Having been thoroughly alienated from any indigenous resources, notably Confucianism, to help with national reconstruction, being utterly disillusioned by the imperialist designs of Japan in collusion with the Western powers, Chinese intellectuals tried desperately to find a way out of China's semicolonial status. The combination of cultural iconoclasm and political patriotism considerably narrowed China's options in its path toward modernization. Understandably, the introduction of Marxism-Leninism and the rise of the Chinese Communist Party were widely accepted by Chinese intellectuals as both necessary and desirable. Socialism was not imposed on China; it was the answer "totally iconoclastic and fiercely nationalistic" Chinese intellectuals found for China's salvation. When Mao proudly announced that "China has stood up" at the Gate of Heavenly Peace on the founding of the People's Republic of China (October 1, 1949), there was genuine jubilation.[21]

The Korean War, the rift with the Soviet Union, and the support for Vietnam further enhanced the intellectual conviction that the People's Republic under the leadership of the Party was basically correct in developing a modernizing strategy of self-reliance congenial to China's specific conditions. The mechanism of mass mobilization with an overbearing if not an omnipotent polity, a command economy, and group orientation, was the logical outcome of the felt need for a strong center. The "political system which is highly centralized, disciplined by a moralistic ideology, and heavily dependent upon authority"[22] was assumed by intellectuals to be the most effective method for China's modernization. The intractable realities of land and population and the hostile geopolitical environment created by the hegemonic control of the superpowers made it necessary for China to generate her own resources for development. The barracks mentality allowed the state to engage the whole country in a large-scale "socialist experiment" without a voice of discontent being raised. The antirightist campaign which stigmatized virtually all intellectuals outside the Party, like the ruthless policy of sending

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intellectuals down to remote rural areas for reform through labor, met with little resistance. The unintended consequence was tragic:

> The spirit of self-sacrifice, with its attendant willingness to subordinate all personal concerns to the well-being of the group, motivated by an idealism to involve one's body and soul actively in the revolution to save China, served to weaken the intelligentsia in a way unprecedented in Chinese history.[23]

The community that resulted from this totalism, with its command economy and its group values, was a socialist state without basic liberties or rights, where private property and even the concept of privacy were outlawed. The astonishing fact is not that the intellectuals were silenced, but that they were willing to accept being taciturn as a minimum condition for participating in the socialist experiment.

The phenomenon of the refusenik, an integral part of the political and social landscape in the Soviet Union, was conspicuously absent in socialist China. The idea that as a member of the intelligentsia, inspired by the spirit of the Enlightenment, one would automatically alienate oneself from the state by subscribing to an alternative sense of truth and reality in opposition to the official ideology was preposterous; it was thought to be a demonstration of one's penchant for egoistic bourgeois mentality wholly incongruous with China's concrete situation. Nor was the argument of the Slavophiles persuasive. If the personality of Solzhenitsyn appears somewhat anachronistic even to contemporary American eyes, it was wholly inconceivable in the Chinese intellectual context. Even the arch–cultural conservative Liang Souming (1893–1988) fully supported the socialist approach to China's modernization. Any romantic assertion about the relevance of the richly textured pattern of China's past to her modern transformation would have been rejected outright as "excessive tenderheartedness" toward one's heritage. The paucity of either traditional or nonsocialist Western symbolic resources enabled the Party to have a monopolistic claim in the ideological domain.

The evolution of the *danwei* (unit) system, which eventually subsumed all personal, familial, local, and state structures under a comprehensive system of physical and symbolic control, was a rational outcome of this socialist rhetoric. The logic is simple but persuasive: to allow the Party leadership to utilize fully all the

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nation's human and material resources for the common good. The Party is an instrument of total mobilization, minimizing all wastefulness caused by deviation. There was no danger of corruption of power if the Party embodied the general will of the whole populace. The major threat to this overall plan would be the inability, or worse, the unwillingness, of the intelligentsia to see both its soundness and its practicability. Since the overwhelming majority of intellectuals fully supported the grand design, even though they themselves were under tremendous suspicion, they accepted, at least passively, and many undoubtedly actively, the three inseparable dimensions of socialist China: an all-pervading authoritarianism, centralized economic planning, and highly coordinated group orientation. Either by choice or by default, the Chinese intellectuals tried hard to collaborate with the Party to bring about a new socialist order.

This implicit "covenant" made every intellectual vulnerable. Each aspect of his or her "being in the world"—birth, residence, growing up, schooling, work, travel, marriage, childbearing, childrearing, aging, death—was confined and defined in a tightly structured network. Constantly coached to act according to a prescribed pattern, they even developed internal referential surveillance to guard themselves against feudalist backsliding and the allure of bourgeois commercialism. When some were singled out for disciplinary action, they were promptly isolated by their fellow intellectuals. At the same time, they themselves immediately imposed a moratorium on their *guanxi* (human relations), fearing that their "social disease" was potently contagious. Even conjugal or parental relationships could not create a safe haven for the "bad elements" (the rightists in the 1950s or the counter-revolutionary academic authorities in the 1960s). Numerous divorce agreements were signed simply to protect spouses and children from being contaminated by politically incorrect persons. The anticipated "confrontation between the brightest but marginalized intelligentsia and the least educated but most powerful cadres" did not take place. The intellectuals paid dearly for their willing incorporation into the grand Party design.

A distinctive feature of this overall plan is the rare combination of constraint and uncertainty. The omnipresence of the *danwei* system, informed by the ubiquity of the "personal file" (*dangan*), containing sensitive data on one's family history, education, political background, and ideological attitude, superimposed a watertight com-

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partment on the intellectual. There was little horizontal or vertical mobility. One was literally at the mercy of one's unit. Yet, this meticulously constructed mechanism of control did not necessarily give one a sense of security. Far from being a protective cocoon, it was an integral part of the mass mobilization scheme. Intent on dramatic social transformation, the system was designed for dynamic process rather than for static structure. The life world of the Chinese intellectuals, individually and communally, was characterized by the sound and fury of political campaigns signifying the destructive restructuring of their human relations, jobs, mental universes, and every aspect of their physical existence.

They could take little comfort in knowing that occasionally the top leadership as well as the "good elements" (the 95 percent majority) also experienced the same fate. That President Liu Shaoqi died a lonely death after much humiliation and physical abuse in 1969, that starvation was the aftermath of the ill-conceived Long March, which claimed more than 20 million lives according to conservative official estimates, did not lead intellectuals to refuse to identify themselves with the socialist course. After all, Liu Binyan's "second kind of loyalty"[24] meant that true loyalty took into consideration the long-term well-being of the Party. Though Wang Ruoshui remarked jokingly that in the Chinese Marxist camp, where one person had been deified as God and the rest reduced to ghosts, he remained a staunch supporter of socialism.[25]

The residual of this unquestioned commitment to the common goal remained strong throughout the early 1980s. The Party, as the embodiment of a historical mission to make China modern, was surely not infallible, as the official and nonofficial commentators on the Cultural Revolution vigorously argued in the printed media, but since it had been instrumental in defining collectively what the course of action ought to be at any given juncture, the Party was the most reliable *modus operandi* in adjudicating ideological disputes through consensus. The erratic and often chaotic mass-line politics during the Cultural Revolution were proof that the smooth functioning of the Party at the ideological center was vitally important for social stability, a precondition for economic development. The Party, so conceived, was not only a political instrument but also a moral force. To be sure, the Party might have committed major mistakes in the past by allowing itself to be mismanaged, misguided, misappropri-

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ated, and manipulated to serve the private interests of a small coterie of power holders, but to the extent that the specific conditions contributing to China's backwardness had not been fundamentally changed, the Party had a critical role to play, which justified both its existence and its irreducibility. To challenge the authority of the Party was not only to deny its legitimacy and to question the cumulative wisdom it symbolized, but also to raise serious doubts about the rationale underlying China's socialist approach to modernity. For those who held responsible positions in government, the mass media, and institutes of higher learning, any doubt of the Party was a grave matter, a threat to their livelihood, a heavy burden on their conscience. The lack of a communal critical self-consciousness among the intellectuals was evidenced in Ba Jin's abortive attempt to build a Cultural Revolution museum to serve as a perpetual reminder of the brutal persecution of thinkers, writers, scholars, and teachers. The intelligentsia, cooperating with the Party, preferred collective amnesia as a less painful approach to the national disgrace.

The situation changed drastically in the late 1980s. Deng Xiaoping's strategy that economic reform could proceed without political restructuring was no longer practicable. The ideological ethos of the Party leadership, with its emphasis on the superiority of the socialist model, appeared outmoded, irrelevant, and to many university students, ridiculous. On the economic front, urban reform was fraught with self-contradictory features and unpredictable dangers. Despite the rhetoric of decentralization, the Chinese government was never prepared to relinquish its monopolistic control of heavy industries—machine-tool production, shipbuilding and public transportation, banking, insurance, broadcasting, foreign trade, and even tourism.[26] Those enterprises constituted the bulk of the nation's productivity. Liberalization simply permitted management to exercise some discretion in decision making. Private entrepreneurship was limited to small shops, food services, retail trade, and certain new businesses deemed either unprofitable or unmanageable under public ownership. The vibrancy of the newly emerging private economy was itself a mixed blessing. As taxi drivers or retail sellers began to earn more than professors and higher civil servant cadres, a sense of relative deprivation was acutely felt by the intellectuals: "those who play the piano are inferior to those who move the piano" and "the

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one who cuts open the skull [brain surgeon] is worse off than the one who shaves the head [barber]."[27]

The problem was compounded by a fierce struggle in the highest echelon of the Party between the promoters of economic rationalization, who opted for technical solutions to complex issues of labor, inflation, price, and ownership, and the partisan doctrinaires, who still adhered to Soviet-style economic planning. The over-enthusiasm of the reformers, determined to stretch to the limit their tentative programs in an adventuristic brinkmanship, and the inflexibility of the hard-liners, still clinging to Marxism as a security blanket as well as an instrumental justification for their activities, incapacitated the Party to make any headway in developing a coherent policy. The Party itself, in the perception of the intellectuals, lost much of its credibility as the locus of leadership; intraparty politics blatantly exhibited "surprise, intrigue, and the work of unidentified forces."[28] The boldness of Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika* that released much intellectual power, thawing the frozen discourse of communism, made the paralysis of the Chinese gerontocracy intolerably confining and oppressive. Frightened by the explosive energy unlocked by the Solidarity movement in Poland, Deng strongly advised his colleagues that harsh measures would be meted out to deal with any students' or workers' demonstrations. Meanwhile, intellectuals reached broad consensus that they could no longer support the government unless efforts were substantial and sustained in five critical areas: (1) anticorruption, (2) punishment of official profiteering, (3) revitalization of education, (4) promotion of democratic polity, and (5) persistent and continuing reform.[29]

As the Party's public accountability continued to erode, the Chinese communist leadership took on more and more the features of a private clique obsessed with its own vested interest. Instead of practicing socialism, they seemed to be guided by the rules of the game of secret societies ("black societies"). When Zhao Ziyang was alleged to have leaked the most jealously guarded Party secret to Gobachev on May 16, 1989, that, despite Deng's titles, he was the final decision maker on all vital issues, it merely confirmed the strong impression that the Long Marchers and the veterans of the Yan'an period had transformed themselves into beneficiaries of a nepotistic network, resembling the inner court in imperial China. The nickname for Deng was "the Empress Dowager"; many of his associates

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resembled the eunuchs and in-laws of the emperor's family, with neither legitimacy nor credibility. The faith in the Four Cardinal Principles was lost, and, with it, the trust in the accountability of the Party and the efficiency of the government. Deng Xiaoping's opening remarks to martial law officers on June 9 were fatalistic:

> This disturbance was bound to come sooner or later. It was determined by the international macro climate and China's micro climate. It was definitely coming and was something that could not be diverted by man's will; it was only a matter of time and scale.[30]

The new and total alienation of the intelligentsia from the Party created new possibilities for a style of politics unprecedented in socialist China, but uncannily bona fide in historical terms.

THE PUBLIC SPHERE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Non-Marxist currents of thought have dominated the intellectual landscape of socialist China since 1985. They were not floating symbolic resources, but organized social forces, claiming an institutionalized base, having far-reaching political implications. Although universities and colleges provided safe havens for such currents to flow and flourish in urban centers throughout China—notably Beijing, Shanghai, Quangzhou, and Wuhan—offered a hospitable and encouraging environment for their development. A variety of innovative networks, from formally organized and government-sponsored international conferences to ad hoc gatherings of like-minded people, fundamentally restructured the pattern of intellectual communication. The constraint of vertical integration imposed by the *danwei* system broke down. Enterprising intellectuals were able to take all sorts of initiative to start their own magazines, establish their own academies, organize their own research teams, found their own publishing companies, form their own salons. A curiously non-socialist phenomenon occurred in which the *danwei* system was supplanted by a new style of voluntary association. Especially noteworthy was the emergence of the patron-client relationship as a salient pattern of human interaction in think tanks, adult education, correspondence schools, training centers, and consultation groups, reminiscent of joint ventures in the capitalist economy. The largest computer company, Beijing Stone Group, for example, developed its

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own research institute; it later became a key player in the Democracy Movement in the spring of 1989.

Actually, shortly after the reinstitution of college entrance examinations in 1977, university students had begun to develop local and national networks. Taking advantage of the experience of "establishing revolutionary ties" (*geming chuanlian*) during the Cultural Revolution when the Red Guards were given special permission to travel free all over the country by public transportation (mainly by train and bus), they set up numerous channels of communication to develop their own distinctive style of "life politics."[31] The class of 1977, for example, managed to create a loosely structured but amazingly effective alliance, involving seventeen key universities throughout the country, to make their voices heard. Only weeks after the fall-term classes were in session, they published the first issue of *This Generation,* showing a high level of intellectual sophistication on issues relating to democracy and freedom. Although plans for subsequent issues were made, with representatives of the participating universities working out their implementation, the Party authorities at the Beijing Normal University promptly put a stop to the joint venture. Still, similar efforts were made at Peking University, People's University, Nankai University in Tianjing, and Wuhan University, among a host of other institutes of higher learning.

There were deep historical roots for such university student involvement. In socialist China, they had considered themselves politically engaged, relevant, and potent. In an elegiac couplet lamenting the death of Hu Yaobang, the following line appears:

> The sound of wind, the sound of rain, the sound of books being read;
> Each sound calls out for the heroic soul.[32]

This adaptation of Gao Panlong's (1562–1626) couplet for the Donglin Academy in the Ming dynasty shows a powerful sense of intellectual self-definition. The original reads:

> The sound of wind, the sound of rain, the sound of books being read, each sound enters our ears;
> The affairs of the family, the affairs of the country, and the affairs all under Heaven, each affair touches our hearts.[33]

Since sounds of wind and rain symbolize disturbances in nature, the message is clear. It is the personal responsibility of those who are privileged to be educated to speak out in time of national crisis.

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This centuries-long tradition of intellectual protest took on a new form in socialist China. The authoritarian state, with its modern technology of surveillance and its comprehensive intelligence network, allowed little space for dissident activity. Furthermore, since the Party assumed the role of the sole spokesman for the general will of the people, its security apparatus was particularly sensitive to ideological deviation. It is, therefore, awe-inspiring to learn that, despite the apparent lack of a "loyal opposition," voices challenging the legitimacy of the Party, the authority of the state, and the validity of the official ideology were frequently heard. What the class of 1977 expressed as the authentic voice of their generation was none other than the continuation of a persistent subterranean tradition.

An early example of this was the work of the literary theorist Wang Shiwei, who sparked an intense debate among young revolutionaries in Yan'an when he probed the dark side of the communist leadership with his impassioned essay "The Wild Lily" in the 1940s.[34] The plurality of considered opinions, expressed by Western-trained intellectuals who challenged every aspect of Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong's Thought in 1957, was another obvious example.[35] The famous "Liyizhe" big-character poster (*dazibao*), "A Call for Democracy and Rule by Law," in 1974 was symptomatic of how deeply the spirit of protest had been ingrained in the otherwise enslaved intellectual mind.[36] With 20,000 Chinese characters, "Liyizhe" (a pseudonym for three ideologically sophisticated young workers in Guangdong) raised serious doubts about the socialist system in China.

The Tiananmen incident of April 5, 1976, in which hundreds of thousands of mourners for Premier Zhou Enlai defied the strict orders of martial law and expressed their moral indignation against the power holders in poems on big-character posters, signified the potential of this undercurrent. In fact, it was the brutal suppression of this spirit of protest that led to the downfall of the Gang of Four, the reemergence of Deng Xiaoping. Despite Deng's ruthless tactics, outlawing the big-character posters, the Xidan Democracy Wall lived on as a shared memory, a source of inspiration. It is not surprising that in a series of letters that opened the floodgates of protest in 1988–1989 Ren Wangding, Fang Lizhi, and Bei Dao all joined in asking that the hero of the Democracy Wall, Wei Jingsheng, be pardoned.

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The practice of "public discussion" (*gonglun*) in traditional China, aptly explained by William. T. de Bary, is relevant.[37] The communal critical self-consciousness of Confucian intellectuals, underlying their whole discourse, is predicated on a multifaceted mode of moral reasoning. As those fortunate enough to have read the books of the sages and the worthies, they are no longer "private citizens" but witnesses of the Mandate of Heaven. As transmitters of culture informed by a profound sense of history, they are responsible for providing continuous critical reflection on current politics. As guardians of public morality who work with their hearts and minds to establish a constant purpose in life without access to permanent property, they are particularly concerned about the well-being of the people. And, as educators dedicated to the creative transformation of society, they must cultivate their own reflectiveness. Intellectuals as witnesses, transmitters, guardians, and educators are required to engage themselves in open discussion for the sake of the public good as well as their own solidarity.[38]

The distinction of "public" (*gong*) and "private" (*si*) is crucial but subtle. It is misleading to take a static structuralist approach by assigning a specific area to each of these categories, for inherent in the dichotomy is a perceived attitude laden with broad moral implications. The idea of *gong* as referring to "the sum total of the harmonized self-interests of all members of a community," "altruism (nonselfishness)," or "the imperial bureaucratic state"[39] is helpful except in its failure to account for the dynamic interchange between enlightened self-interest and public accountability characteristic of the Chinese discourse on *gong*. Located on the continuum between the self and "all under Heaven" mediated by the family and the state, the realm of *gong*, often understood as public-spiritedness, emerges at all levels. Cultivation of one's personal life, regulation of the family, governance of the state, and peace under Heaven are, in their proper contexts, realizations of *gong*, whereas self-centeredness, nepotism, chauvinistic nationalism, or anthropocentrism can be perceived as an expression of *si*.

The *locus classicus* for Sun Yat-sen's favorite phrase, *tianxia weigong* (impartiality all under Heaven), is the idea of "the Great Unity" in the *Book of Rites*.[40] From this exalted perspective, the doctrine of national interest, without appealing to a more generalized principle of mutuality, is a manifestation of the "private" domain; it

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fails to live up to the expectation of public-spiritedness. On the other hand, learning for the sake of the self, to the extent that it helps overcome selfish desires, is an embodiment of *gong*. When Deng Xiaoping reemerged as a public-spirited leader in 1978, he was sometimes affectionately nicknamed by students as well as peasants "the Blue Sky," symbolizing his uprightness and impartiality. However, after the Tiananmen tragedy, despite the self-righteous tone of his pronouncements, in the eyes of the Beijing citizens, he was simply desperately trying to justify his selfish design on behalf of the Central Committee. As Deng seeks to consolidate his gerontocracy, it more and more resembles the private domain of a secret society. The Party, with all its propaganda machine, is no longer in control of the public sphere.

It is by now well established that the Democracy Movement, at its inception, made a conscientious attempt to avoid challenging the authority of the Party by offering a radically different vision of social and political reality. Wisely advised by Ph.D. candidates and faculty members, the university students made a deliberate effort to avoid using Western democratic concepts, such as liberties and rights. Instead, they opted, principally out of necessity, to accept the rules of the game imposed by the regime and to evoke values espoused by the Party and readily understandable to people in the street. Indeed, student leaders initially went out of their way to demonstrate their solidarity with the Party. A cynic may suggest that the tactic was intended to undermine the authority of the Party leadership, exposing its incompetence, ruthlessness, or both. Yet, it does not require a charitable reading of the documents to note that their primary objective was not confrontation but dialogue.

The judgment that Zhao Ziyang and perhaps Deng Xiaoping were on their side was based on a measure of realism, not on fantasy. The apparently sincere and symbolically effective ritualistic gesture of presenting their request by kneeling on the steps of the People's Great Hall and begging Premier Li Peng to receive them in an audience was unexpected. Still, by fully acknowledging the asymmetrical relationship between absolute authority and powerlessness, they deeply impressed the ordinary Beijing citizen and gained the overwhelming sympathy of workers. The avoidance of any reference to the possibility of a subversive act against the political establishment was a deliberately calculated move, dictated by a realistic assessment of the

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total situation, designed to establish the broadest base of popular support. The demands were modest, reasonable, and practicable; the methods, nonconfrontational, nonviolent, and peaceful. Yet Deng's reaction was uncompromising, harsh. He first characterized the movement as "turmoil" in the infamous April twenty-sixth editorial of the *People's Daily*.[41] As this inflamed student and citizen anger, the tone of the protest became increasingly indignant. Still, the New May Fourth Manifesto, drafted by student leaders, remained judiciously measured:

> Our views are not in conflict with those of the government. We only have one goal: the modernization of China.
>
> . . . Our present tasks are: first, to take the lead in carrying out experiment in democratic reform at the birthplace of the student movement—the university campus, democratizing the systematizing campus life; second, to participate actively in politics, to persist in our request for a dialogue with the government, to push democratic reforms of our political system, to oppose graft and corruption, and to work for a press law. We recognize that these short-term objectives are only the first steps in democratic reform; they are tiny, unsteady steps. But we must struggle for these first steps, we must cheer for these first steps.[42]

It is scarcely surprising that many analysts, with the hindsight of the massacre in mind, speculated that "had Deng Xiaoping and the government adopted a more conciliatory and flexible approach at the beginning, agreeing for example to meet with the representatives of the autonomous student union, the Students' Federation, and refraining from branding the demonstrations 'turmoil,' citizen sympathy for the students would have faded and a large-scale movement been avoided."[43] The students' emotional appeal to the Chinese citizens by staging a hunger strike on the thirteenth of May was perhaps the single most important reason for their success in claiming moral authority in the public sphere:

> Our purest feelings of patriotism, our simple and complete innocence, have been called "turmoil," have been described as "ulterior motives," and have been alleged to be "exploited by a small handful of people." We wish to ask all true Chinese citizens, to ask each worker, peasant, soldier, city resident, intellectual, noted figure, government official, policeman, and those people who have concocted these accusations

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> against us to place your hands on your hearts, and ask your consciences what crimes we have committed. Are we creating turmoil?[44]

By identifying themselves with "this country," "its people," and "the government," the students ingeniously and effectively pushed Li Peng, Deng Xiaoping, and their gerontocracy into a corner. The arrival of Minister of Finance Guo Wanjong from Taipei in early May and the highly publicized Gobachev visit in mid-May deepened the sense of humiliation, helplessness, and urgency among those in power. Subsequently, the students, with the full support of the Beijing citizens, managed to frustrate several plans of bringing soldiers into the capital, into the square itself. A false sense of security became pervasive.

The fateful May 17 declaration, signed by many luminaries of Chinese cultural and intellectual life, including the political scientist Yan Jiaqi, the philosopher Li Zehuo, and the journalist Dai Qing, pointed the accusatory finger directly at Deng Xiaoping and called him "an aged, fatuous dictator."[45] This defiant tone grew, despite the declaration of martial law on May 20. By then, the intelligentsia strongly believed that Li Peng's dismissal was inevitable, even imminent. Deng had no choice but to compromise. The euphoria was such that thoughts of a postsocialist China with a constitutional multiparty democracy became common. The sudden appearance of the "Goddess of Democracy," staring at the giant portrait of Mao Zedong on the evening of May 29, was perhaps the most dramatic demonstration of this newly emerged and provocative confrontation, just prior to the June 4 tragedy. It is worth noting that even then, the choice of democracy over liberty was intended to stay clear of any possible linkage with Bourgeois Liberalization.

The short-lived Democracy Movement (April 17–June 4), shows conclusively not only the presence of animated debates in the public sphere but also the beginnings of a civil society in socialist China. For approximately fifty days, the city of Beijing exhibited a civic spirit, a sense of civility, thought to have been destroyed by the Cultural Revolution. There was a pervasive feeling of interconnectedness, mutual bonding, and collective responsibility in public places—markets, crowded buses, mess halls. In the midst of what the government condemned as a major turmoil, traffic incidents decreased substantially, the normal functions of the metropolis contin-

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ued smoothly, the streets were safe, and the legendary "Flying Tigers" formed a mobile communication unit to coordinate security matters throughout the city.[46] There was a heightened sensitivity toward the needs of others, reminiscent of the polite old Peking citizenry. Altruism and self-sacrifice were readily visible as the numbers of residents determined to help the students swelled. According to several accounts, even secret societies of thieves and others of that sort publicly announced their support for the student cause by voluntarily suspending their clandestine activities.[47] This brief utopia, widely reported in the Chinese print and electronic media, especially by journalists from Hong Kong, helped spur a demonstration by more than a million residents in the British colony in support of the Democracy Movement against the imposition of martial law on May 21.

The euphoria of the Chinese intelligentsia may have been premature, but the belief that China will eventually make an exit from communism or at least transcend the Four Cardinal Principles is not wholly unfounded, even if qualifications need to be made. Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong's Thought—all constitutive parts of the official ideology—have lost their persuasive power. Mao's stature, both physical and symbolic, has fallen. Lenin is no longer relevant; Marx is being humanized. The Chinese Communist Party has been inoperative in vital areas of economic reform. It may be dismantled or fundamentally restructured through election or negotiation without the social fabric being destroyed, with the inevitable massive instability that would follow. "The democratic dictatorship of the people" is an oxymoron. Derived from the classical Marxist-Leninist idea of "the dictatorship of the proletariat," it is basically a justification for a one-party autocracy predicated on the economic system of public ownership. Market-oriented reform has already undermined its validity. Socialism, in Richard Baum's pithy phrase, as cognitive formalism, narrow empiricism, dogmatic scientism, feudal bureaucratism, and compulsive ritualism[48] is dead.

In short, the Four Cardinal Principles cannot be upheld. Fang Lizhi was not unduly optimistic when he prophesied that while democratization remained an unfinished revolution, "China's time will come."[49] Yet, in the absence of a Holy Grail of democratic opposition, notably "the extraordinary alliance of workers and intelligentsia that was once embodied in Poland's Solidarity movement,"[50] China's

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goal of modernization is elusive and her path toward democracy is certain to be tortuous. The difficulty of taking advantage of the dynamism in the public sphere and transforming it into a full-fledged civil society seems to be the major problem.

Marie-Claire Bergère, in her analysis *The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie, 1911–1927,* singled out a critical element in "the sorry history of the Chinese Bourgeoisie in the 1920s," namely the perception "that the State is indispensable to the constitution of a society and that liberalism itself must be a product of the State."[51] The events at the Gate of Heavenly Peace (Tiananmen) may enhance her conviction that a fatal flaw in the Democracy Movement is "the habit of the heart" endemic to the Chinese intellectual community since the turn of the century:

> It is hardly surprising that the Chinese Bourgeoisie and part of the May Fourth intelligentsia arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to restore governmental authority and that, despite the fact that it meant giving up the autonomy they had acquired thanks to economic expansion and the decline of the bureaucratic apparatus over preceding years, they even worked toward that end.[52]

This prompted He Baogang and David Kelly to conclude that "while defining democracy, legality, [and] human rights as cultural universals, Chinese intellectuals know that access to them can be gained only in the context of a politically loaded act of cultural critique. They cannot appeal to the symbolic order of European civilization as their lost home."[53]

The conviction that given virtuous, culturally enlightened political leadership, civil society is superfluous may have been deeply ingrained in the Chinese intellectual consciousness, but the dilemma is that without "a full-blooded legitimation of civil society"[54] the intelligentsia has neither the independence from the state nor the access to power at the center to achieve its purposes. If Chinese intellectuals are to be "self-consciously coordinated toward common political objectives,"[55] they must transform their communal critical self-consciousness into the self-reflectivity of a strategy to develop civil society not only for its own sake, but also for its instrumental power to bring about a new political order.

This option does not necessarily require the *embourgeoisement* of individuals mobilized against the state. The process of relegitimizing

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the civilization-state (not the Party) with a strong civil society and a symbolically respectable and culturally influential center may turn out to be the most efficacious course of action. China's strong tradition of self-reliance at personal, familial, communal, and national levels, together with a richly textured social networking, provides valuable resources for this effort. The perceived "tragedy of the Chinese revolution" that "even with all the shocks the country has gone through, its culture is still one of extreme dependence upon authority"[56] is conceptually limited and empirically unwarranted. To paraphrase Pierre Nora, a Chinese intellectual "will always have trouble understanding why for twenty years so many young people in France preferred being wrong with Sartre rather than right with Raymond Aron."[57] The historical fact that "France has had a secularized heritage of several hundred years of Christian transcendence and the Catholic Church"[58] is vitally important in such matters. Ernest Gellner's observation is particularly instructive. The French style of Enlightenment, "whether in the form of the doctrine of the Encyclopaedists, the Comtian positivism, or its prolonged later addiction to Marxism," is drawn to "systems built of mundane, naturalistic or historicist elements, but one, in its general architecture and spirit, mirroring all too faithfully that which it would repudiate and replace."[59]

Predictably, in the Chinese case, even after the crisis in community becomes evident, the communal heritage survives not only in the economy and in social organizations, but in the intellectual ethos and in the minds of the people as well. The background of China as a civilization-state is relevant here, but the assertion that "Chinese culture, especially after the ideological impact of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, is less ready than ever to accept division of authority and precise accountability"[60] is mistaken. Notwithstanding the danger of New Authoritarianism or the anathema of cultural elitism, the revitalization of civil society with Chinese characteristics is already well under way. The transformation of Leninism to "authoritarian-pluralism" may be painfully difficult but probable; as a first step, it is inevitable.[61] Pluralism in economic structure, political

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organization, social practice, and cultural life is an emerging phenomenon, a feature of socialist China.

PLURALITY OF EXPERIENCE IN A CIVILIZATION-STATE

Put in the double contexts of cultural China and industrial East Asia, a new perspective presents itself. The kinds of intellectual effervescence in socialist China, while astonishingly new on the Mainland, have been fully appreciated and often channeled through appropriate institutions in art, literature, thought, and religion contributing to cultural vibrancy in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea, and Japan. The sight and sound of young artists experimenting with avant-garde forms and young musicians improvising with electronic systems have not "spiritually polluted" cultural China or industrial East Asia on the periphery. On the contrary, as these societies become "more porous, thus susceptible to a variety of external influences,"[62] including those of Bourgeois Liberalization from the West, they are more conscious of the need to tap their own indigenous resources for cultural reconstruction.

Furthermore, diversity in economic culture, together with inclusiveness in the political process, make Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons figure among the more dynamic and transforming regions in the world. The fact that, in comparison with Western Europe and North America, a non-Western and non-Protestant area has developed a less adversarial, less litigious, and less individualistic but equally, if not more, competitive market economy indicates that modernization based on shared Confucian heritage can assume a distinctive East Asian or, by implication, Chinese cultural form. It is worth noting that, with ethnic homogeneity, family stability, national commitment to education, and respect for authority, industrial East Asia and, to a certain extent, communist East Asia as well are not today confronted with racial tension, drugs, crime, lack of child care, and deterioration of quality in education, as we are, even though they may suffer from other equally serious problems of their own.

Among the non-Marxist ideas that have emerged in the 1980s, three feature most prominently: scientific rationalism, democratic liberalism, and Confucian humanism. The fruitful interaction among them is reflected in journals such as *Reading, Toward the Future, Culture: China and the World,* and *New Enlightenment* and also in

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the networking of institutions such as the Academy of Chinese Culture, the Youth Forum, and the Twenty-First Century Research Institute. Of course, "in the face of the pragmatic impulses stemming from economic primacy," ideology "as a set of cosmic ideas and values that provide a comprehensive guide to thought and action" seems less compelling.[63] Nevertheless, the new ideological vitality, symbolizing a level of self-reflection, critical thinking, and cultural sophistication rarely encountered since the May Fourth Movement in 1919, was certainly instrumental in launching the Democracy Movement.

Intellectual freedom reached new heights in late 1988 and early 1989 because of heightened communal critical self-consciousness among the intellectuals. The convergence of opinion that extraordinary events would occur in 1989, on the occasion of the bicentenary of the French Revolution, the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, and the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic, proved correct. By then, "many intellectuals [had] spun out of the Party's control and even out of the orbit of Party influence." The trend was irreversible: "As the bounds of intellectual freedom had expanded, so had the conviction that there should be no bounds."[64] However, the focus among several conflicting modes of inquiry amidst a wide variety of ideological recommendations continued to be: "Whither China?"

The political implications for any answer to this question, from the perspective of scientific rationalism, democratic liberalism, or Confucian humanism, are far-reaching. An intriguing counterfactual speculation is: had the "dialogue" between the intelligentsia and the Party been successful, could democracy with distinctive Chinese characteristics have been developed within the system? As expected, the post-Tiananmen consensus is no. Relegitimization of the Party, with New Authoritarianism, was never a live option, the current attempts appear doomed. Yet, the question merits further consideration. Since "neither the world at large nor Asia in particular [is] destined to have a total convergence of political systems,"[65] China's "tradition, scale, geographic position and stage of development" must be taken into consideration.[66] Land scarcity, overpopulation, and the fundamental conflict between industrialization and ecology are intractable realities. The cry for China's Gobachev has subsided, though his reputation as a liberal-democratic hero is established in the minds of exiled intellectuals. Ironically, Li Peng, the much hated

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"black hand" behind the Tiananmen tragedy, seems to have avoided the anticipated fiscal disaster; he has put his economic reform project on a seemingly firm foundation.

Still, the apprehension for China's future remains unusually strong. *The Yellow Peril* (*Huanghuo*), a recent science fiction by an unidentified author with close ties to the Democracy Movement, offers a Chinese version of Armageddon caused by a nuclear confrontation between two post-Deng political factions, forcing millions of Chinese to emigrate.[67] Reactions to the doomsday message, reflected in scores of articles in cultural China outside the Mainland, conveys a strong and widely shared feeling that China after socialism will be fraught with contradictions and struggle. The anxiety that a frustrated and humiliated China, like the angry goddess of volcanos in Hawaiian mythology, will unleash powerful destructive force to end all the pain and suffering of an oppressive world reveals itself frequently in current Chinese art and literature:

> I want to use my sulphur, my lava, my showers of stones
> To destroy your colosseum, your temples, your cities;
> To destroy your sun god, your moon god, your Supreme Being;
> To destroy everything, everything that you have forced upon me.[68]

On the other hand, a more sober view holds that China will gradually develop a de facto democracy informed by "authoritarian-pluralism," a sort of Singaporean model. It is worth noting that local elections have already been put into effect at the commune-village level, which means that an estimated 500 million Chinese have been exposed to some measure of democracy in practice.[69] Given the centrality of local elections in Taiwan's democratic experience, the political significance of this phenomenon should not be underestimated. The actual practice of regional autonomy in matters like taxation, security, investment policy, foreign trade, and life-style is being experienced by prosperous provinces like Guangdong, Fujian, Zejiang, Jiangsu, Liaoning, and Hunan, a practice again congenial to democratization. Signs of economic diversification, that will lead necessarily to political pluralism, clearly advantageous to developing a democratic ethos, are readily visible.

"Natural economic territories" (NETS) are being formed along the coast, significantly changing the economic and social landscape of socialist China. Visible NETS, either firmly established or emerging,

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now include Hong Kong/Guangdong, Taiwan/Fujian, and Shandong/South Korea. The emerging interdependency of these economic zones makes the pattern of interaction and interpenetration more complex daily, challenging not only political authority but the idea of sovereignty as well.[70] In the regional context, discussions of the construction of a "greater Chinese economic circle" (*da Zhonghua jingjiquan*) involving scholars from Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, though still in an inchoate stage, are likely to bring about joint ventures at both government and private levels.[71] Overseas Chinese investment, through local ties and family connections, has penetrated every area in urban China. The transformation of the rural economy to semi-industrialization of the countryside is widespread. Manufacturing, construction, transportation, and commercial food services have become independent productive sectors in rural economy. Farmers today constitute 53 percent of the total population; many predict that the figure will be further reduced to 32 percent by the end of the century.[72] Non-government-controlled productivity, including private and market-oriented semiofficial enterprises, claims more than 50 percent of the national economy; its contribution to the 9 percent national growth rate in 1990 was substantial.[73] These factors suggest that the argument that China's route to modernization will be continually monitored by "a political system which is highly centralized, disciplined by a moralistic ideology, and heavily dependent upon authority"[74] is at least questionable.

Authoritarian-pluralism seems to suggest that the coexistence of centralized control and an open-door policy is perhaps practicable. Yet, "political tightening and economic diversification are basically incompatible."[75] Openness will lead to decentralization. Is the disintegration of China as a unified nation inevitable? Speculations on reorganizing socialist China as a federation of independent states or as a united states, as a commonwealth or simply as the Middle Country abound. Fears of a regression to the warlord period of disunity, with military confrontation between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait as a result of the Taiwan independence movement are common. Predictions of the collapse of the Hong Kong economy by 1997, or the drifting apart of the prosperous southeastern provinces from the impoverished north are persistent.

An issue of great significance is ethnicity, though racial tension is not today a serious source of unrest in Chinese society. China's

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minority populations, 6 to 8 percent, depending on the different criteria used in official estimates and communal self-definition, may actually involve as many as 80 million people sparsely settled in border regions occupying more than half of Chinese territory. The increasing awareness of Chinese intelligentsia, especially the recently exiled scholars and students, that Chinese culture has never been and, for decades to come, will not be able to assimilate Tibetans, Mongols, Kazhaks, and Uighurs generates a new realism. This cultural reflexivity enables them to transcend nationalism, not to mention Han Chinese chauvinism, to openly acknowledge the gravity of the ethnic factor in Chinese domestic and international politics. Some have already publicly supported the establishment of an independent Tibet. The shape of China as a political entity is likely to be redefined before the twenty-first century.

From a historical and a cultural viewpoint, symbolic communication and a shared value orientation featured more prominently than bureaucratic control and military conquest in the traditional Chinese civilization-state. The success of the Qing dynasty (1644–1912) to forge a solid alliance of Manchus, Chinese, Mongols, and Tibetans in establishing a unified empire may give the impression that administrative effectiveness and military might were the main reasons for the survival of the Middle Kingdom. In fact, in the governance of the provinces and the management of international affairs, the Manchu court relied more heavily on ideological persuasion and moral sanction than on brute force. An unintended consequence of the Manchu conquest of China was the total sinicization of the Manchus, so that they now comprise some of the most erudite of scholars of Confucian classics.

Educational edicts, morality books, public lectures, sermons, village compacts, community schools, mutual responsibility associations, and self-help groups were all essential ingredients in the moral ecology of traditional Chinese society. Needless to say, the manner of living ordinary life in China, constrained by the circumstances of the initial conditions compounded by the institutional imperatives of modernization, makes Chinese society radically different from anything that exists in Western Europe, North America, or industrial East Asia. The renewed faith that the cultivation of the person and the regulation of the family are preconditions of organic social solidarity and governance of the state is in no way surprising. The

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national craze of *qigong* (a system of deep breathing exercises for physical and mental health) confirms the staying power of certain patterns of thought: self-cultivation is the root for communal well-being. This mechanism of control, laden with dangers of ideological manipulation and moralist suppression, is apparently incompatible with liberties, rights, and the due process of law, but its traditional appeal to social solidarity and its added modern appeal to the principle of equality are assets rather than liabilities in China's quest for modernization.

The absence of church-state differentiation connotes the lack of an exclusive dichotomy between the secular and the sacred. The process of secularization, so crucial to the rise of the modern West, did not occur in China, because the civilization-state was as much an ethicoreligious presence as a sociopolitical reality. The importance of symbolic communication in the maintenance of such a system cannot be exaggerated. Edwin Reischauer, in his masterly essay "The Sinic World in Perspective," addresses this issue in the context of East Asian culture including Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Whether labeled "the Confucian cultural universe" or "the Chinese-character (*Hanzi* or *kanji*) cultural circle," the relevance and centrality of the symbolic communication and a shared value orientation in the Sinic world is essential to an understanding of the economic dynamics and political transformation of both industrial and communist East Asia.

We have only begun to explore the implications of these immensely complex phenomena. If we take the Chinese character as an example of symbolic communication, we must imagine, in the European context, not only the survival of Latin but also the total absence of any other written Romance or Germanic languages. This analogy, while not totally applicable to Japanese, Korean, or Vietnamese, which have developed their own distinctive scripts, only emphasizes the differences with China, where linguistically the difference between Cantonese and Mandarin is greater than that between English and German, but where Cantonese and the Mandarin-speaking Northerners share the same written language. Their actual linguistic gap is considerably narrowed by appealing to a common cultural heritage.

By contrast, the linguistic communication of the European Community, for obvious cultural reasons, must be facilitated by a translation apparatus more elaborate than that of the United Na-

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tions. Imagine the positive contribution of a shared written language to reintegration, if the Europeans were able only to write in Latin though they spoke local dialects, such as English, Spanish, French, and German. Linguistically, the European Community can never be fully integrated, despite the popularity of English. The Chinese civilization-state, by contrast, is not likely to fall apart, though in theory and practice several mutually unintelligible linguistic groups exist in China proper.

Still, the argument that Chinese civilization has given "inordinate strength and durability" to the political culture of the state is compelling. By the standards of the Chinese historical experience, the European Community has never experienced real political reintegration since the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. The united front formed out of economic contingency can hardly address deep-rooted nationalist and racial sentiments. The frustrating episode of the concerted effort of the European Community to deal with the ethnic conflict in Yugoslavia is a clear indication of this. The anticipated adoption of a uniform currency (imagine the disappearance of the British pound!) only scratches the surface of a solid base for real interdependency. The disintegration of the USSR, in this sense, is a return to normalcy. After all, it was a failed socialist experiment of the twentieth century. It is unlikely that an independent Ukraine or the sovereign state of Georgia will inspire separatist movements based on cultural and ethnic sentiments in Sichuan, Hunan, or Guangdong. The past USSR and the future European Community are artificially constructed out of political and economic visions and experiences, whereas China as a civilization-state has endured for millennia. Indeed, China proper has been reunified and reintegrated, often under foreign conquests, at least five times since the collapse of the Han dynasty in the third century.

Undoubtedly, "China is a society that will undergo many travails in its long march toward development,"[76] but, as a civilization-state, the shared value orientation that the divergent forces in cultural China learn to adopt through confrontation as well as negotiation will have enduring significance for the global community. Can a market economy be guided by an impartial state, which possesses great authority but limited power, through nuanced and publicly accountable negotiations? Is democratic polity compatible with meritocracy, defined not only by professional competence but also by

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moral rectitude? Can dignity, independence, and autonomy of the person be incorporated into a concept of selfhood as a center of relationships and as a broadening process of self-realization? Is China's self-interest generalizable to include an ever-expanding network of interdependence: cultural China, Confucian East Asia, the Asia-Pacific Rim, and beyond? Does China as a civilization-state have enough symbolic resources to depoliticize the center and, at the same time, revitalize its cultural authority? One wonders.

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I am indebted to Wilfred C. Smith whose conception of "corporate critical self-awareness" is a source of inspiration for my idea of "communal critical self-consciousness" and to Rosanne Hall for searching criticisms of earlier versions of this paper.

ENDNOTES

[1]Please refer to the quotation on the adjacent page which is from "The Great Learning," chap. 42 of the *Book of Rites*. For a standard translation, see Wing-tsit Chan, trans. and comp., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 86–87.

[2]Senator William Bradley's remark on the occasion of the confirmation hearing of Robert Gates's nomination as the CIA director in the *Congressional Record—Senate*, vol. 137, no. 161, November 4, 1991, S 15838.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 23.

[5]*Genesis*, 1:28.

[6]Taylor, 23.

[7]Talcott Parsons, *The System of Modern Societies* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 114ff.

[8]Pierre Nora, "America and the French Intellectuals," *Dædalus* 107 (1) (Winter 1978): 327.

[9]S. N. Eisenstadt, "Continuity and Reconstruction of Tradition," *Dædalus* 102 (1) (Winter 1973): 6.

[10]Friedrich A. von Hayek, *Constitution of Liberty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), and W. W. Bartley, III, ed., *The Fatal Conceit: The Errors of Socialism* (London: Roultedge, 1988).

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[11]Andrew J. Nathan, *Chinese Democracy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 31–44, 87–106, 133–151.

[12]Joyce Kallgren, "China in 1983: The Turmoil of Modernization," *Asian Survey* 24 (1) (1984): 60–80. Also see Brantly Womack, "Modernization and Democratic Reform in China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 44 (3) (1984): 417–440.

[13]For an example of this independent-mindedness, see David Kelly, "The Emergence of Humanism: Wang Ruoshui and the Critique of Socialist Alienation," in Merle Goldman, et al. eds., *China's Intellectuals and the State: In Search of a New Relationship* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 159–182.

[14]I am indebted to Professor Su Shaozhi for this information. As the director of the Marxist and Leninist Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Professor Su was instrumental in setting the agenda for a number of discussions.

[15]The main thrust of the editorial is a critique of theoretical dogmatism in favor of pragmatic adaptation to the concrete political and economic conditions of the twentieth century. The statement that Marx has been dead for more than 101 years is considered particularly provocative. *Renminribao (People's Daily)* 7 December 1984, section 1.

[16]Quite a few students from the USSR expressed great admiration for China's reform in informal discussions associated with my course on Confucian philosophy at Peking University in the spring of 1985.

[17]This historical allusion was intended to show that although Hu may have been humiliated by his dismissal, his death was a major historical event as monumental as the most revered sacred mountain.

[18]Ernest Gellner, *Plough, Sword, and Book: The Structure of Human History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 116.

[19]Oral presentations at the conference in commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement (1919), organized by the *China Times* in New York, April 14–16, 1989.

[20]Mao's realism, correctly interpreted, is a recognition that right politics are superior to military might. Thus, having acknowledged the importance of the gun, Mao insisted: "Our principle is that the party commands the gun and the gun shall never be allowed to command the party." See Ellis Joffe, *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in Chinese Officer Corps, 1949–1964* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 57.

[21]Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 645–662.

[22]Lucian W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 213.

[23]Tu Wei-ming, "Iconoclasm, Holistic Vision, and Patient Watchfulness: A Personal Reflection on the Modern Chinese Intellectual Quest," *Dædalus* 116 (2) (Spring 1987): 75.

[24] See Liu Binyan, *A Higher Kind of Loyalty,* trans. Zhu Hong (New York: Pantheon Books, 1990). For an early example of Liu's spirit of protest, see Perry Link, ed., *People or Monsters?* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).

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[25]For Wang's Marxist humanism, see Wang Ruoshui, *Wei rendaozhuyi bianhu, (In Defense of Humanism)* (Beijing: Sanlian, 1986).

[26]Ray Huang, *China: A Macro History* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1990), 254–255.

[27]Ibid., 268.

[28]Pye, 200.

[29]Cheng Xian, *Tiananmen de fansi (Reflections on the Gate of Heavenly Peace)* (Hong Kong: Lizhi Publishers, 1990), 13–40.

[30]"Deng Xiaoping's Remarks to Martial Law Officers on June 9," in Han Minzhu, ed., *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 369.

[31]Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 209–231.

[32]Han Minzhu, 8.

[33]Ibid. My translation of the original couplet is slightly different; I render the critical term *shi* as "affair" rather than "news."

[34]Merle Goldman, *Literary Dissent in Communist China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 25–27.

[35]Merle Goldman, *China's Intellectuals: Advise and Dissent* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 1–116.

[36]Ibid., 189–191, 234–235.

[37]William T. de Bary, *The Trouble with Confucianism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 80–86.

[38]Tu Wei-ming, "The Structure and Function of the Confucian Intellectual in Ancient China," in S. N. Eisenstadt, ed., *Origins and Diversity of Axial Age Civilizations* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York, 1987), 360–373.

[39]He Baogang and David Kelly, "China's Civil Society and the Intellectuals," unpublished manuscript, to appear in Robert Miller, ed., *The Development of Civil Society in Communist Systems* (London: Allen and Unwin, forthcoming), 3.

[40]For a modern exposition of this idea, see Chan, 730–34.

[41]Han Minzhu, 83–85.

[42]Ibid., 137.

[43]Ibid., 87.

[44]Ibid., 200.

[45]Ibid., 221.

[46]Ibid., 258.

[47]There are several eyewitness accounts that such notices were posted in the streets of Beijing. See Suzanne Ogden et al., eds., *China's Search for Democracy: The Student and Mass Movement of 1989* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1992), 301. I am

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grateful to Nancy R. Hearst of the J. K. Fairbank Center for East Asian Research at Harvard University for this reference.

[48]Richard Baum, "Science and Culture in Contemporary China: The Roots of Retarded Modernization," *Asian Survey* 22 (December 1982): 1167.

[49]Fang Lizhi, "China's Time Will Come," *Journal of Democracy* 2 (3) (Summer 1991): 50–53.

[50]Leszek Kolakowski, "The Postrevolutionary Hangover," *Journal of Democracy* 2 (3) (Summer 1991): 72.

[51]Marie-Claire Bergère, *The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie, 1911–1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), trans. by Janet Lloyd from the 1986 French edition, 240.

[52]Ibid.

[53]He Baogang and David Kelly, 18.

[54]Ibid., 16.

[55]Ibid., 18.

[56]Pye, 213.

[57]Nora, 335.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Gellner, 116.

[60]Pye, 213.

[61]Robert A. Scalapino, "The U.S. and Asia: Future Prospects," *Foreign Affairs* 70 (5) (Winter 1991–1992): 23.

[62]Ibid., 25.

[63]Ibid., 21.

[64]Han Minzhu, 20.

[65]Scalapino, 25.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Bao Mi, *Huanghuo (The Yellow Peril)* (Ontario: Canada Mirror Books, 1991). For a brief report, see *Christian Science Monitor*, 3 January 1992, 1, 4.

[68]The poem entitled "Vesuvius Volcano" was written by a student at the Beijing Languages Institute on April 24, 1989. Han Minzhu, 48.

[69]*Shijieribao* (World journal), 19 December 1991, section 8.

[70]Scalapino, 20–21.

[71]The conference sponsored by several research organizations in Hong Kong was held in Hong Kong, January 19–22, 1991. For a report on the planning of the conference, see *Shijieribo* (World journal) 30 December 1991, section 1.

[72]*Shijieribao* (World journal), 19 December 1991, sec. 8.

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[73]I am indebted to Zhu Jiaming of M.I.T. for this information. For useful perspectives on this complex matter, see Barry Naughton, "Implications of the State Monopoly over Industry and its Relaxation," *Modern China* 18 (1) (January 1992): 14–41, and Ole Odgaard, "Inadequate and Inaccurate Chinese Statistics: The Case of Private Rural Enterprise," *China Information* 5 (3) (Winter 1990–1991): 29–38.

[74]Pye, 213.

[75]Scalapino, 33.

[76]Ibid., 34.

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